A Response to Patricia Crone's Book

(Meccan Trade and the Rise of Islam)

By

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In the Name of Allah the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

Introduction

Patricia Crone's book ***Meccan Trade and the Rise of Islam***, Oxford, 1987 grabbed my attention, because it tackled an era connected with "The History of the Arabs before Islam", a course I am teaching to female students at the Department of History, King Abdul-Aziz University, Jeddah.

It is noteworthy that when I started reading through this book, I was really shocked by what I read between the lines and even overtly. What shocked me is that some things were clear, but others were grossly incorrect and hidden behind a mask of fake historical research, the purposes of which are obvious for every professional researcher. Therefore, as a scholar in the field, it was necessary for me to respond to this book so that readers will not be deceived and misguided by the great errors introduced to them under the guise of historical research or scholarship.

Crone is an orientalist who raised somewhat clever questions, but her answers were misleading. Most of the time, she deliberately used documented and logical coordination in order to prove the opposite of what has already been proven to be correct. It is a well-known fact that the easiest way to pass an illogical issue and to make readers swallow it is to begin by an assumption which looks logical and persuasive, but is in fact essentially void. Then from this false assumption, you jump to a set of conclusions in order to make your case logical and acceptable.

Deception here lies in the speed at which false assumptions are passed on skillfully and quickly so that the reader will not pay attention to the issue of their validity. Thus, the reader will be easily persuaded to accept the findings.This technique is followed in historical studies by some non-objective researchers. They insisted on a certain idea, and to prove this idea they look for evidence within a context which seems to be persuasive, but in fact lacks validity.

Crone has changed and substituted some of the words mentioned in historical texts. She introduced other detached texts, and intentionally ignored the sources which contradict her opinions; otherwise, her idea would collapse. Also, she stated conclusions without mentioning the references she depended upon. Furthermore, she accused certain orientalists who disagreed with her of trusting Islamic sources despite all their defects.

This persistent endeavor on her part aimed at misgiving "Surat Quraysh" and "The Battle of Badr". The later, according to the Holy Qur'an and other Islamic sources, took place in the month of Ramadan. She also changed actual historical locations; Mecca was changed from its well known geographical and historical location. She put the Ka'ba in the North of the Arabian Peninsula. Moreover, she claimed that Prophet Muhammad**,** peace be upon him (pbuh), appeared in "Balqa", in the farthest North of the Arabian Peninsula, despite her emphasis that the events related to the Prophet were predestined to take place in the South.

I examined her many fallacies as an attempt to list the most important issues for the purpose of deliberately deceiving and misleading others. In this study, I discussed all these issues stating the main themes as follows:

First, is Crone's rejection of historical and geographical facts claiming that the Holy City of Makkah is not situated on its original historical location. She moved the location of Makkah on the map thereby rejecting all indications made by Greek and Roman authors to Makkah in the old ages.

Second, is Crone's denial of the Pilgrimage to Makkah (the Ka'ba) before Islam. She claimed that they went to three marketplaces near to Makkah: Ukaz, Dhul-Majaz, and Majanna. She did not explain hermitage before and in Islam, and in both cases she neglected circamumbation and *Talbiay (the pronouncement made by Pilgrims to Allah during Hajj).* In most cases, she fabricated superficial logical coordination in order to prove the opposite of what has already been proven. She did not pay enough attention to the diverse sources which contradict and completely undermine her opinion, exploiting the lack of awareness of most European readers regarding the rituals of the Pilgrimage.

Third, Crone refuses to recognize the role of Quraysh in the international trade of the Orient. She insists on marginalizing and limiting Quraysh's role to local areas. Often, she was about to recognize Quraysh's international trade, but intentionally refrained from doing so by using vague sentences and without giving any explanation. Moreover, she completely rejected the explanations of

scholars on Surat Quraysh, on which the internationality of Quraysh's trade before Islam was very clear.

Fourth, Crone mistrusted the mission of the Last Prophet, Muhammad (pbuh) by claiming that his mission appeared in the North of the Arabian Peninsula and not in the Holy City of Makkah. She did this in order to undermine one of the most important bases of the Islamic mission which started from Makkah. She claimed that Quraysh resided in the North of Hejaz, not in Makkah, though it is an undisputable and well-known fact that Quraysh lived in Makkah.

Fifth, there is great confusion in the history of the great Battle of Badr. She put aside the first Battle of Badr, substituted it with the second Battle of Badr which is known as the "Nakhla Raid" and placed it instead of "The Great Battle of Badr" (the third battle). She did this in order to match her work with the history which was written in Arabic on a papyrus. Papyrus was discovered in Palestine in 1956 and most of its letters were missing. This ploy was not a slip; it was a deliberate attempt to raise suspicions about the authenticity of the Holy Qur'an. Despite her confession that the Holy Qur'an did not undergo any changes,her discussions showed the opposite.

Sixth, Crone misinterpreted the causes of success achieved by Islam in Madinah. She skillfully manipulated the spiritual problem (issues related to religion and doctrine) in Arab countries before Islam. She claimed that Quraysh did not play an important role in the service of the Ka'ba before Islam; that Makkah was not conquered peacefully; and the success of the Islamic State was

associated with invasion and Arab nationalism. Such ideas did not exist in the seventh century A.D. when Islam appeared.

Seventh, she committed mistakes when she referred to some Qur'anic verses, although it is obvious that she is highly proficient in Arabic and made no mistake in translating Arabic texts. Later, I will show readers how she made mistakes when she referred to many verses of the Holy Qur'an. This means that this skilful historian had certain objectives and ulterior motives in her mind. Moreover, she used irony and sarcasm as a means to persuade readers; she used unacceptable words in her description of the Arabs. She trespassed all limits when she criticized Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). By using this style, she disclosed her hidden agenda which affected her work and, as a result, destroyed what could have otherwise been a respectable historical analysis.

I will respond in details to what Crone has introduced in all these themes one by one. Furthermore, the kind of sources she depended on is well documented and attached at the end of this study.

There are several reasons for responding to Crone's book.

First, I wanted to address non-Arabs and non-Muslims who have limited knowledge or harbour misunderstanding about Islam and the Last Prophet (pbuh). I am not addressing Muslims because they are familiar with these topics and have no doubt about them. In addition, I want to refute the arguments of the enemies of Islam who are happy with the blatant lies which were

presented to them under the guise of scientific research, and who used the Internet as a forum in order to praise this work which was compatible with their vile intentions.

It should be noted that after I published my replies to Crone's writings, she removed all her personal data from the Internet, with the exception of her e-mail. It seems to me that she did not expect the translation of her book, which I did with her permission, to be accompanied by a deliberate scientific study, and detailed accurate comments not only on every idea but on every single word she misrepresented.

Second, in addition to educated readers, Crone's book is a major reference for students who study the history of the Arabs before Islam in faculties of letters or other colleges at American and European universities. Therefore, I was over- cautious in responding to her in English in order to unveil the mistakes she committed for the purpose of discrediting Islam under the guise of Makkan trade.

Third, Muslim readers were shocked by the way the author counterfeited the facts for the purpose of reaching false and fabricated conclusions. Motivated by their enthusiasm to defend Islam, those readers responded to her but without documenting their sources. This led me to tackle this issue systematically using approved techniques supported by corroborated evidence in accordance with the methodology of scientific studies, aiming at unveiling the suspect intentions and ulterior motivations of this orientalist for all Arabic and English readers to see.

Fourth, forewarning Arab readers, who are likely to be impressed or trapped by this kind of Western thought, against unsuspectingly and unconsciously reiterating what is presented to them. This doesn't mean that we should not read Western historians and scholars and not to learn from diverse schools of history. On the contrary, this is an inevitable issue, on condition that we read with a critical mind and be able to judge historical facts in a deep, accurate and reliable way.

In today's world, some unfair scholars aim at effacing Islamic identity under the umbrella of globalization and dissolving Arabs and Muslims within the framework of the sweeping materialistic civilization, in addition to brain-drain and superficial modernization. Hence, we have to keep our eyes wide-open; we have to make active use of our minds and intellect in order to identify the plots of those who attempt to abuse and rewrite our history. Also, we should not be misled by the great names of historians, organizations,or universities.Our responsibility as historians is to preserve our history and to refine it. Our language, our history and particularly our religion Islam, form the most important pillars of our identity. Moreover, dangers and misfortunes threaten us from all directions by the forces that be.May Allah help us!

In addition to what has been mentioned above, Crone indulged in many linguistic and methodological mistakes as follows:

Although Crone is fluent in Arabic, she transliterates Arabic words into Latin letters intermittently. As a result, some letters from one word overlap with other letters from

another word. This led to a change in the structure of the word.

The confusion between the letters (b and h) led to a great change in the structure and meaning, especially for non- Arabic speakers.

Islamic sources were devalued and referred to as secondary and tertiary literature, in spite of the fact that those sources constitute the primary major historical sources and the data base for fruitful research. Crone showed great interest and enjoyment when she found a contradiction between some accounts. She criticized the sources, but she refrained from going the next step. In historical research, contradiction between the accounts or texts does not mean that all accounts are untrue and unreliable. In the next logical but necessary step, the researcher is obligated to analyze all accounts and texts in order to be able to judge whether certain texts are acceptable, thers are rejected, some are improbable, certain texts are preferable, and others are valid and reliable.

If there is a contradiction between two accounts, is this an evidence against them? If this is the case, then a historian would be able to cancel the most important dates. At the same time, a historian would commit a mistake if he/she completely trusted the sources without scrutinizing them. Crone intentionally committed mistakes when she refused to accept contradicting texts without analyzing them. In doing so, she can later on easily pass any judgment that suits her motivations in accepting or rejecting any opinion or text. She showed perseverance in

examining the texts, but she consciously chose to distrust Islamic sources when they are in fact the primary sources to rely on.

Fifth, we have to focus our attention on the necessity of reading all that has been written about Islam by non-Muslims, and we have to scrutinize and refine these writings. Allah has preserved Islam; in one way or another He will guide someone to expose the plots against Islam. Muslims are not in a state of unawareness, as some tend to think, and they will never continue to receive strikes without forcefully retaliating in defense of their sacred religion which is the most precious thing they have.

Sixth, I would like to express my thanks to all those who helped in the translation and publication of this work. May Allah bless all who serve the interest of Islam and Muslims.

All Praise be to Allah, Lord of Worlds.

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Discussing the Themes

The First Theme

Makkah: Name and Geographical Location

Crone said: "*It is obvious that if the Meccans had been middlemen in a long-distance trade of the kind described in the secondary literature, there ought to have been some mention of them in the writings of their customers. Greek and Latin authors had, after all, written extensively about the South Arabians who supplied them with aromatics in the past, offering information about their cities, tribes, political organization, and caravan trade; and in the sixth century they similarly wrote about Ethiopia and Adulis. The political and ecclesiastical importance of Arabia in the sixth century was such that considerable attention was paid to Arabian affairs, too; but of Quraysh and their trading center, there is no mention at all, be it in Greek, Latin, Syriac, Aramaic, Coptic, or other literature composed outside Arabia before the conquests.*

This silence is striking and significant. It is so striking that attempts have been made to remedy it. Thus we are told that Quraysh are indirectly attested in Pliny's Dabanegoris region, that Ptolemy mentions Mecca under the name of Macoraba, a name supposed to be reflected in Pliny's portus Mocborbae, identified as Jedda, and Ammianus Marcellinus likewise mentions Mecca, this time under the name of Hierapolis. All these suggestions should be dismissed out of hand.

Dabanegoris cannot be constructed as Dbu Bani Quraysh, "the (area) pertaining to Bani Quraysh," as von

Wissmann would have it.For one thing,such a construction would be South Arabian than Arabic, the language one would have expected to be reflected here. For another,the expression "Banu Quraysh" is impossible, Quraysh being no patronymic: as a descent group Quraysh were Banu Fihr. But above all, Pliny locates the region in question in southeast Arabia, more precisely somewhere between Ommana and the Hadramawt; and the same is true of portus Machborbae, as mentioned in the same passage. That places explicitly identified as southeast Arabian should have been misconstrued as Quraryshi domains says much about the intoxicating effect of Mecca on the source-critical faculties of otherwise sober scholars.

So does the identification of Ptolemy's Macoraba with Mecca, which has gained almost universal acceptance. It was first made on the ground; the names were vaguely similar and the location vaguely right, Macoraba being assumed to reproduce a name such as Makka-Rabba, "Great Mecca." But this is a most implausible construction, which has since been replaced by makrab or mikrab, meaning temple. But in the first place the root krb doesn't denote holiness in Arabic, as opposed to South Arabian, so that once again the language reflected would not be the one expected."

Then she continued: "*In the second place, a name composed of the consonants mkk cannot be derived from the root krb. It follows that Ptolemy would be referring to a sanctuary town which was not called Mecca. Why then identify the two? Rescue attempts such as mikrab Makkah, "the sanctuary of Mecca," are no better than Makka-*

Rabba, for all that we clearly need some sort of addition to account for the feminine form reflected in the Greek.

The plain truth is that the name of Macoraba has nothing to do with that of Mecca, and that the location indicated by Ptolemy for Macoraba in no way dictates identification of the two. If Macoraba was located in an Arabic-speaking environment, its name is more likely to reflect an Arabic form such as Muqarraba than a derivation from South Arabian krb; if it was located among speakers of South Arabia, it cannot have been the city of interest to us; and if Ptolemy mentions Mecca at all, he calls it Moka, a town in Arabia Petraea. Naturally, there is no Mecca in Ammianus Marcellinus."[1]

The above stated opinion can be refuted as follows:

First, it is dangerous to establish historical facts depending on a linguistic assumption which is open to all probabilities.Moreover,Crone laboriously tried to overlook the reference made to Makkah by three Greek and Roman writers, namely: Pliny the Elder who wrote in the first century[2;] Ptolemy, the Alexandrian geographer who wrote

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1 Partricia Crone, ***Meccan Trade and the Rise of Islam***, Oxford, 1987, pp. 134-136.

[2] Pliny the Elder (23/24-79 A.D) wrote many books: ***A biography of some important figures in the Roman society, Roman wars against Germans, The Art of Rhetoric*** which consists of 31 parts. ***Naturalis Historia*** *is his most important work.* It consists of 102 parts. This great encyclopedia covers geography, human races, psychology zoology, botany, pharmacology, and mineralogy. This encyclopedia consists of 2000 books, out of which 100 books were written by Greek and Roman scholars.

Cf. Al-Roubi, Amaal Muhammad "Arab Peninsula in the Writings of the Greeks and the Romans and the Rise of Mecca a Sacred City in their

in the period of 121-150 A.D.[1]; and the historian Ammianus Marcellinus from the fourth century A.D.2.

Writings", Association of History and Archeology, ***Journal in Gulf Countries***, No. 6, 1426 (2005), pp. 82, 98, 99.

Cf. Pliny the Elder, ***Oxford Classical Dictionary***, Oxford 1957, pp. 704.

[1] Claudius Ptolemaeus was born in Ptolemi in Upper Egypt. He is an Alexandrian scholar. He wrote in the period of 121-151 AD. He wrote many scientific books, in which he combined the studies of math, astrology, nature, and geography. His book ***Mathematike Suntaxis = σϋνΤταξίς "Μαθηματική*** known as (the great compiler), another book about (Cross Vertical Angles) and a third one about ***Stereographic***; a fifth about "optics "which is considered as the first attempt for rays refraction theory. ***Geography*** ΎΦήγήσις ωγραφικήεΓ"*is* his most famous book. It consists of eight parts in addition to an atlas which includes the world map.

Ptolemy did not depend only on astrology, but also on the reports sent by travelers to Alexandria. When he sketched the world map (a copy of which is unavailable for us), he left a space in the western part of it; believing in the existence of continents other than Europe, Asia, and Africa which were known at that time. The Arabian Peninsula is a part of the fourth and seventh maps of Asia. Ptolemy cited a series of long lists of tribes and areas names, and geographical names along the coasts starting from the top of the Red Sea to the Arabian Gulf. He also mentioned names of cities, villages, and gulfs. In addition, he listed the names of more than one hundred cities and villages many of which were mentioned for the first time in the sources of the ancient world. This work is one of the most accurate books of geography in the ancient world. Cf. Al-Roubi (Amaal Muhammd), ***Arab Peninsula in Greeks Writings,*** pp. 86-101; ***Oxford***. ***Class. Dict***, p. 746; Al-Roubi, Amaal Muhammd, ***Egypt in the Roman Era***, A Socio-Economic Political Study in the Light of Papyri Documents, 30 BC-284 A.D., Jeddah, 1404 (1984), pp. 262-271.

[2] Ammianus Marcellinus was born in a rich family at Antioch, Syria around 330 AD. He is considered to be the last of the great Roman Historians. His work ***Rerum Gestarum*** which he wrote in Latin covered the period 78-378 AD. The first thirteen books of this work were lost, and the books 14-31 formed an uninterrupted account of the events from 353-378 AD. He had

Crone rejected Pliny's view because in her opinion Quraysh being no patronymic:As a descent group Quraysh were Banu Fihr. But the reality of the situation is quite the opposite.Quraysh is a name which refers to the descendants of Banu Fihr. Historians agree that the tribe of Kinanah, to which Qussai Ibn Kilab belongs, is the origin of Quraysh. The final say in this issue is what the Prophet (pbuh) said: "We Banu Al-Nadhr are from Kinanah" and the Prophet (pbuh) did not go past Adnan when he talked about his lineage1.

Despite the fact that there are differences among historians about the lineage of Adnan, there is a consensus among them that Adnan's lineage ends with Ismail (pbuh). This means that Quraysh has its deep roots in Makkah since that distant era. According to the resources available for us, we cannot specify when this branch of Kinanah was called Quraysh; whether this was a name of a person; or a characteristic of one of their famous men. I tend to support the idea that the name of Quraysh was derived from the Arabic word "Taqarush" which means gaining money by working in trade instead of raiding and looting other tribes.[2]

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likely finished his work about 391 A.D. He was sharp-witted, neutral and objective in his evaluation of the events. Moreover, his great knowledge about Latin books, which he cited many times showed, that he was highly educated. Cf. Al-Roubi, Amaal Muhammd, ***Arab Peninsula in Greeks Writings,*** pp. 89-90-102; ***Oxford***. ***Class. Dict***, p. 430.

[1] Ibn Sa'ad, ***Al-Tabaqat Al-Kubra***, Part 1, p. 47.

[2] Ibn Hisham, Abu Muhammad Abdulmalik Al-Ma'afri (died 213 H.), ***The Prophet's Biography***, edited by Mustafa Al-Saga and Abdulhafeez Shibli, Part 1, Beirut, No date, p. 93; Al-Tabri, Abi Jaafar Muhammad Ibn

Quraysh became important in trade in the first or third centuries A.D. This conclusion is supported by a South Arabian inscription which dates back to the era of the Hadhrami King (Chatramotitae) Al-Iz Ibn Al-Iz Yalt who ruled either in the first or in the third century A.D. The inscription stated that the king received delegations from Qrashtan in his inauguration at Anood Castle. Along with them there were representatives from Palmyra, Kazd, Chaldaens, and India. From the nationalities of these delegations, it seems that this gathering had a connection with trade. This can be attributed to the role Hadramawt played in Arab incense trade in old ages. Hadramawt was one of the most important producers of the best kinds of incense[1].

Second, there is no reference whatsoever to the so called Dabanegoris region in Southern Arabic in the

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Jareer (died 310 H./923AD), ***History of Apostles and Kings***, edited by Muhammad Abu Alfadl Ibrahim, Volume 1, Part 1 and 2, Beirut, no date, Part 1, p. 64. Concerning various explanations of the name Quraysh, cf. Salama, Awatif Adeeb, ***Quraysh before Islam, its Religious, Economical and Political Role***, Riyadh, 1414 H./1994 AD, pp. 38-41; Shahbehai, Jihan Abdurrahman, ***The Role of the Honorable Mecca in the Economical Life before Islam***, ***A Study of the Period between the Sixth and Seventh Centuries AD***, Unpublished M.A. Dissertation, Jeddah: King Abdul-Aziz University, 1420/2000, pp. 20-22. Roman Era, A Socio-Economic Political Study in Light of Papyri Documents 30 BC-284 AD, Jeddah, 1404 (1984), pp. 271-272.

[1] Quraysh delegation consisted of fourteen women, of them Khadija, Asma'a, Hind, and others, whereas every other delegation was represented by two women. Concerning the inscriptions cf.: Yamme, A. Editor and Translator. The Aluqla Texs (Documentation Sud-Arabe) Washington D.C. 1963. pp. 38-44, and Mahran, Muhammad Bayoumi, ***Studies in the Arabs Old History***, Riyadh, 1397/1977, p. 407; Salama, op. cit., p. 40.

archeological resources or in the writings of the Greeks and the Romans. Also, there is no sea port called Portus Mochorabae in this area, or an area called Macoraba.

Third, it is very easy to refute the statement that the northern linguistic construction should be Dhu Bani Quraysh and not Dabanegoris, as mentioned by Pliny. On one hand, the difference between the two forms is very marginal and it can be easily interpreted depending on means of communication in the first century A.D. On the other hand, differences are likely to take place in transliteration of names from Arabic into Latin.

Fourth, concerning the city of Moka, it does exist in Petra in the Arab state of Anbat in the farthest north of the Arabian Peninsula as Crone mentioned; but it is an inland city and has no seaports. Pliny learned a lot about this city from his contemporary Strabon, the geographer. He wrote what he knew about this in his ***Geography***. He also visited this city and stayed in Petra at the time when the Romans were preparing for their campaign against Yemen in the year 26/27 B.C. Three years after, they wiped out Kleopatra the last of Macdoniac Ptolemic dynasty who ruled Egypt from 323 to 30 B.C. It is also possible that the Anbat tribes which migrated to this area at the top of the Red Sea and settled there were originally from Hejaz. They started to ship Arabic and Oriental goods to Gaza and Renoclora (Al-Areesh) seaports on the Mediterranean. It is probable that they named their city Moka after the Holy City of Makkah as a good omen. Some Arab tribes were accustomed to this habit of giving the name of the place they came from to their trade centers along the trade route extending from farthest south to farthest north

western of the Arabian Peninsula, such as "Maeen" and "Sheba" in the north. Greeks and Phoenician did the same when they established their trade centers in the Mediterranean in the seventh century B.C.

Fifth, the argument that Pliny put Dabanegoris port in South Arabia, precisely in an area between Oman and Hadramawt, is completely untrue. Pliny was talking about the Arabian Gulf and he said he would describe the coast from Charax to Gerhha to Ommanna to the other coasts on the Persian Gulf (Chapter six, paragraph 149). Then he talked about Southern Arabia with its Hadhrami and Sheba incense. But Dabanegoris and Mochorbae ports attracted his attention. These ports are most likely the Al-Shua'bia port which is not far from the present port of Jeddah. Therefore, he talked about them in paragraph 150. This means that it is Crone who says that Mochorbae port is situated in an area between Oman and Hadramawt, but attributed this to Pliny. In addition, no one heard of such a port in the southern part of the Arabian Peninsula.

Sixth, it is not scientifically acceptable to keep reiterating that vague names are similar and vague places are real; similarity should be based on scientific facts.

Seventh, claiming that Macoraba is derived from Makka-Rabba which means great Makkah is untrue. The correct translation is "Lord's Makkah" or "Allah's Makkah"; because the root "mkk" consists of consonant letters meaning "house" in Babylonian and "Rabba" meaning "the Lord" or "Allah" in Southern Arabia, that is, "Allah's House". This linguistic structure is a possessive form and not a derivative one.

Eighth, names of many old cities and countries do not reflect the language of their people. For instance, Egypt is a Semitic name meaning "the dividing border between two lands". Egypt is also derived from the Greek word Aeguptus meaning the "black land" or the fertile land1. If then the Arabic name of Egypt is of a Semitic origin, its name in modern European languages is of Greek origin. Does this mean that old Egyptians spoke the Semitic Language or one of its branches? In the same way, did Egyptians speak Greek in Pharaoh era before Greeks started the first chapter of their history?

Based on the same logic, how can we interpret the name of the city "Thebes" in the western part of Greece in old ages? Did Egyptians establish this city and call it "Thebes" - now Al-Uqssur - the capital city of Egypt in the 15th century B.C. Therefore, it is very difficult to find

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[1] The name of Egypt (MIsr) appeared in the fourteenth century B.C. in "Tel Alamarna" documents when "Rabaadi", Prince of Jubeil, wrote to Pharaoh that because of the threats of his neighbors he might be compelled to send his family to (Mato Misri) which means Egypt. Also the names of Mishri and Missri were mentioned in a Mitanic board; the name Misr was mentioned in a text from Ras Shamra; the name Misrem was mentioned in a Phoenician text which dates back to the early period of the first millennium B.C.; the Assyrians knew Egypt as Missro or Missr; the Aramaeans knew it as Missreen; in the Torah it was mentioned as Missr or Missrayem which refers sometimes to the country and sometimes to the people. The correct name "Missr" is mentioned in the holy Qura'n in the following Suras: Surat Al-Baqrah (61); Surat Yunus (87); Surat Yusuf (21:99). Cf. Mahran, Muhammad Bayoumi, ***Egypt and Old Near East, Alexandria***, Part 1, 1409/1988, pp. 21-24; Saleh, Abdul-Aziz, ***Civilization and Archeology of Old Egypt***, Part 1,Cairo,1962, pp. 2-6.

an accurate explanation for the names of places in old ages, or to attach them to a certain language or race[1].

If Macoraba is derived from the language of Southern Arabia which means “Allah’s city”; this conclusion supports the opinion that Macoraba and Makkah are identical names, especially if we take into consideration the people who lived in this city first along with Hajar, mother of Ismail (pbuh). Those people were the southern tribe of Jurhum who settled with their trade caravans near Makkah after the appearance of Zamzam water. Ismail (pbuh) married a woman from them, then the name of this city "Allah’s House". “Macoraba” spread with their trade caravans which roamed all parts of the Arabian Peninsula.

The Holy Qur'an mentioned the Blessed Kaaba at the time of Ibrahim (pbuh) as “The House”[2]; and Makkah in Babylonian means the house as we have mentioned before. It is a well-known fact that Ibrahim Al-Khalil (pbuh) migrated from the south of Iraq. This supports the idea that the name of Makkah was derived from the Babylonian word “house”. The Holy Qur'an clearly

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[1] Mahran, Muhammad Bayoumi, ***Studies in the Arabs Old History***, Alexandria, 2004, p. 192.

[2] Almighty Allah said: “And remember Ibrahim and Ismail raised the foundations of the House (with this prayer): Our Lord! Accept (this service) from us, for you are the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing” (Surah Al-Baqara, 127). Also, he said: “O our Lord! I have made some of my offspring to dwell in a valley without cultivation, by thy Sacred House, in order, O our Lord! That they may establish regular prayer, so fill the hearts of some among men with love towards them, and feed them with fruits, so that they may give thanks” (Surah Ibrahim, 37).

specifies its name; Almighty Allah said: “The first House (of worship) appointed for men was that at Bakka: Full of blessings and of guidance for all the world” [Surat Al-Imran, 96]. It is a well-known phenomenon that the letter (m) changes into (b) in the language of southern Arabs.[1]

Ninth, finally Crone mentioned that if Macoraba was located in an Arabic speaking environment, its name should be reflected in Arabic and it would be Mugarraba. This is a play on letters and words. The Latin name which Ptolemy mentioned is (Μάκόραβά); the name Crone prefers is Muqarraba. If we transliterate the letters of the former name into Greece, it will be (Μΰκάρραβά). Here, the letter “a” was replaced by “u”; the second “a” was replaced by “o”, and she doubled the Greek ρ =R in Latin. This means the name she suggested is identical to the name Ptolemy mentioned, with the exception of the change of the form of the letters.

Changing letters in the same way as Crone did is very dangerous in such historical research, and this issue is quite clear for critical readers; but it may pass unnoticed in reading fast, or if the reader is unfamiliar with Greek letters.

The geographer Ptolemy, who was one of Alexandria University scholars, wrote in the period of (121-151 A.D.). He mentioned a lot of names of areas and tribes in the western part of the Arabian Peninsula. There is no doubt that by Macoraba he meant Makkah. This idea

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[1] Mahran, ***Studies in the History of the Arabs***, p. 392. cf. Al-Roubi, Amaal Muhammad, “With Patricia Crone and her Book: ***Mecca Trade and the Rise of Islam in Journal of Archaeology and History Association in Gulf Countries***, No. 4, pp. 5ter43-569.

is supported by the fact that he knew Medina and mentioned its name Lathripa. This comes as a result of the great amount of information available in his time about the Arabian Peninsula after the Romans occupation of the Northern part, namely: Syria, Nabataeans Kingdom, and Palestine. The last thing they did in order to firmly control the north western part of the Red Sea was changing Nabataeans Kingdom, which extended to Mada'in Saleh in the north west of the Arabian Peninsula, into a Roman State; this took place in 106 A.D., and it was officially annexed in 113 A.D.

Tenth, the profile of the Arabian Peninsula and its trade centers became clearer to the Roman World, especially for historians who lived in this area for a long period of time and participated in its events. Here, I mean the Roman historian Ammianus Marcellenius who Crone passed by quickly without discussing what he had mentioned. Ammianus, as the last great Roman historian, wrote a history book in Latin. In Part 23 of this book, he listed seven cities in the western part of Arabia.[1]

Five of these seven cities were mentioned by Ptolemy in the same order[2]. It is likely that Ptolemy quoted Ammianus. Ptolemy mentioned the sixth city of Geapolis which was mentioned by Ammianus in another place[3]. Ammianus also did not mention the city of Macoraba which Ptolemy mentioned in the western part of

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[1] Ammianus Marcellenius, ***Remum Gestarum***, Libri XXII, 6, 47. See also Thompson (E.A.),***The Historical Work of A.M.***, London, 1947.

[2] Ptolemy, ***Geography***, VI, 35-45.

[3] Ptolemy, op. cit., vi, 7:29

Arabia. Instead Ammianus mentioned the city of Hierapolis. This name consists of (Hiera) which means holy, and (polis) which means city in Greek and Latin; the correct translation for this name is (the holy city). Ammianus located this city in the western part of Arabia. This is due to the fact that the holiness of the city (Makkah) became well-known in the fourth century A.D. and is supported by the fact that Ammianus did not mention Macoraba which Ptolemy mentioned before as Makkah, as stated before. In the fourth century A.D., the image of main routes and trade centers began to become gradually clear. Actually, the main trade route heading towards the west did not pass directly through Makkah, but the road which passed through Makkah was a side road and a branch of the route to Tarba in the east of Makkah. This road supplied Makkah with gum, myrrh, and other goods. Modern archeological discoveries in 1420-1421 (2000-2001 A.D.) confirmed this fact.[1]

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[1] Lewis (C.T.) and Short (C.), ***A Latin Dictionary***, Oxford, 1969, p. 854.Also,in this dictionary (mactus) which means sanctuary is mentioned, in addition to (macta) which means religious sacrifice, p. 1094.

The main incense route stared from Shabwah to Tamna'a from there to Maeen then to Najran. From there it branched in two

directions: the first passed through Tathleeth to Taballa the to the west of Besha then to Ta'if. It is believed that that this road did pass through Mecca, but it went to Tarba in the east of Mecca. A branch from this road went from Tarba to Mecca. Then it went north to Madina, Khaybar, Dadan Ala'llla (through Mada'n Saleh) on its way to Petra and Gaza.

The second started from Najran through Tathleeth to Wadialdawasr then to Alsaleel passing through Alfow village and from there heading towards Alaflaj and Alkharj. From there it is branched into many roads towards Iraq and the north of Arabia. Cf. Alkhatha'my, Musfar Ibn Sa'ad Ibn Muhammad,

The Second Theme

Pilgrimage to Makkah in Pre-Islamic Times

Concerning this issue Crone said: "*From Ukaz, Dhul-Majaz, and Majanna the pilgrims would proceed to Arafa and Mina. But would they proceed to Mecca too? Wellhausen denied it on the ground that the Muslim pilgrimage is still conducted largely outside Mecca, a point hard to dispute. Though it begins in Mecca its formal start is at Arafa, and though it ends in Mecca, too, its real termination is at Mina, this being where sacrifices are made and heads are shaved, whereupon the state of ihram is abandoned.*

This suggests that the visits to Mecca have been added to an originally independent ritual and there are two further points in support of this view. First, as Wellhausen himself noted, the religious offices connected with the pilgrimage to Arafa were in the hands of Tamimis

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The Political and Cultural Effect of the Incense in Pre-history Ages in ***Journal of Archeology and History Association in Gulf Countries***, No. 3, 1423/2002, p. 21. Archeological excavations done by the Saudi Ministry of Education in 1417 confirmed the existence of the incense route which goes to Mecca. In 1420-1421, an archeological team surveyed an area of 180 square kilometers starting from Mecca to Tarba. This survey confirmed the existence of 25 archeological sites on this route; some of them are foundations of old villages. Also, some parts of the old route and one of the important stations were found. Moreover, 12 landmarks, 17 water springs, and 4 Thamud inscriptions were found. Cf. Alrashed, Sa'ad Abdul-Aziz Al-Rasheod, ***A Concise Report Archeological Activity in Saudi Arabia***, 1420/1421 H. 2000/2001 AD, Gulf

Counties throughout History, Part 3, Riyadh: Journal of Archeology and History Association in Gulf Countries, 1423 H./2002 AD, pp. 448-450.

and others, not of Qurashis: Quraysh are presented as responsible only for the pilgrims in Mecca itself. Second, Mecca is an odd place in which to end the Hajj. Mina and Arafa were uninhabited places devoid of guardians and permanent inhabitants, being active only in the holy months. So also were Ukaz, Dhul-Majaz, and Majanna the harams with which the pilgrimage started: the five sanctuaries outside Mecca form a natural group. But Mecca was a city with permanent population and a shrine endowed with guardians. It was thus a shrine on a par with that of Allat at Taif or al -Uzza at Nakhla not a desert sanctuary. The pilgrimage was a ritual performed at times and places in which everybody downed arms and nobody was in control: a sanctuary owned by a specific tribe does not belong in this complex."[1]

Then Crone continued: "*It could of course be argued that the pilgrimage had been extended to Mecca even in pre-Islamic times and this is how Lammens saw it: the originally independent sanctuaries of Arafa and Mina according to him had been reduced to mere stations on the way to Mecca even before the rise of Islam by the enterprising Quraysh in the course of their commercial expansion. But this is unlikely to be correct. In the first place, the tradition is too eager to dissociate Arafa and Mina from the other desert sanctuaries, attaching them to Mecca instead.*" [2]

Then Crone claimed that she was unable to find any evidence related to the Pilgrimage to Makkah, and she

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[1] Crone, op. cit., pp. 173-174.

[2] Crone, op. cit., pp. 174.

concluded her discussion agreeing with Wellhausen that *"Mecca was not an object of Pilgrimage in pre-Islamic times …the pilgrim fairs were the markets of Mecca: Mecca itself was not a fair. Ukaz, Dhu'l-Majaz, and Majanna, these were the markets of Quraysh and the Arabs."* [1]

Before we begin our discussion let us note the following:

First, Crone made a serious mistake when she said that "Pilgrimage real termination is at Mina, this being where sacrifices are made and heads are shaved, whereupon the state of *ihram* is abandoned." Non-Muslims, undoubtedly, will believe and accept this claim because they are not familiar with the Pilgrimage, which is one of the pillars of Islam, and its rites. The fact is that the rites of Pilgrimage can be completed only if it begins and ends in Makkah with circumambulation of *Ka'ba* and *Talbiay (the pronouncement made by Pilgrims to Allah during Hajj)*. Men disengage from *Ihram* only by shaving their heads or cutting their hair.

Second, Crone neglected many Islamic sources which confirm the connection between Makkah and Pilgrimage in pre-Islamic times. For example, Alkalbi mentioned that the Arabs after Ibrahim and Ismail (peace be upon them) honored Makkah and the Ka'ba, and they performed Hajj and Umrah according to the traditions of Ibrahim and Ismail[2]. When Al-Azaraqi talked about

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[1] Crone, op. cit., pp. 176-178.

[2] Alkalbi, Hisham Ibn Muhammad Ibn Alsa'eb (died 204 H./821 AD), ***Al-Asnam***, edited by Muhammad Abdulqader Ahmed and Ahmed Muhammad Obeid, Cairo, no date, p. 22.

digging the Zamzam water well by Abdul-Mutaleb, he mentioned that Zamzam became more favorable than all water wells in Makkah and pilgrims drank from it.

Also, he talked about how Qussai Ibn Kilab returned to Makkah and stayed till the beginning of the holy month of Du Al-Hijjah. Then he went to Makkah for the Pilgrimage and when he finished he stayed in Makkah[1]. Al-Azaraqi added that people circumambulated Ka'ba and both men and women did this naked if it was the first time they performed the Pilgrimage. He continued to say that Al-Siqaya (providing water to pilgrims) was done by Abd Manaf. They brought water from Khum and Karm Adam water wells on camels using water-skins and canteens, then water is poured into a basin in the courtyard of Ka'ba and pilgrims drink from it.[2] This is how Ibn Hisham described the Arabs before Islam: "They replaced the religion of Ibrahim and Ismail by another religion; they worshipped idols; they strayed away from the right path as nations before them did; but they kept with them remnants from Ibrahim times, such as, honoring and circumambulating Ka'ba, performing Hajj and Umrah; visiting Arafat and Muzdalifa, and sacrificing camels, They also welcomed Hajj and Umrah but they introduced things which did not exist before[3]. Also, Ibn Hisham

[1] Al-Azaraqi, Abu Waleed Muhammad Ibn Abdullah Ahmed (died, 222H., 837 AD), ***Akbar Mecca***, edited by Rushdi Saleh Muhles, Mecca, 1403/1983, Part 1, pp. 105, 113.

[2] Al-Azaraqi, Ibid., Part 1, pp. 180-181.

[3] Ibn Hisham, ***The Prophet Biography***, Part 1, pp. 77-78: When Kinanah and the Quraysh came to Hajj they said: "Labayk allahum labayk, labayk la shareek lek Illa shareek hua lek, tamlikuhu wama melek" and they enter with

introduced Suweid Ibn Al-Samet who converted to Islam and who came to Makkah to perform Hajj and Umrah[1].

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their idols. Almighty Allah said to Prophet Muhammad: "And most of them believe not in Allah without associating (others as partners) with Him." (Surat Yusuf, 106). Yakut Alhamawi said about Hajj to Mecca: "Kings of Himyar, Kinda, Ghassan, and Lakhem went to Mecca for Hajj. Following and honoring Quraysh is a must and a great honor for them. Yakut Alhamawi, Shihabuddin Abu Abdullah Yakut Ibn Abdullah (died 626 H./1228 AD), ***Mu'jam Albuldan***, Beirut, no date, Part 5, p. 183.

Also, Al-Azaraqi mentioned the third wanted to destroy Al Ka'ba, because some people from Hatheel from Banu Lehyan came to him and said: there is a house in Mecca which all Arabs glorify; there, they sacrifice animals and perform Hajj and Umrah" Part 1, p. 132. Also, he said: "Umr Ibn Luhi set up Manat on the seashore next to Qadeed which belongs to to Uzd and Ghassan and which they honored. After they circumambulated the Ka'ba and finished from Arafa and Mina, they only shaved their heads at Manat, and who came to Manat did not do Sa'ay, pp. 133, 125, 132. Cf. Yagout Al-Hamawi, ***Mu'jam Albuldan***, Part 5, Beirut, 1399/1979 AD, p. 204. Concerning Siqaya, Almighty Allah Said: "Do you consider the giving of drink to pilgrims or the maintenance of the Sacred Mosque, equal to (the pious service of) those who believe in Allah and the Last Day, and strive with might in the cause of Allah? They are not equal in the sight of Allah: And Allah guides not those who do wrong" (Surat At- Tauba, 19)

[1] Ibn Hisham, ***The Prophet's Biography***, Part 1, p. 427. Ibn Athir said: "Suweid Ibn Al-Samet came to Mecca to perform Hajj and Umrah". If this text is true, then Suweid has to stay at Mecca till the month of Rajab; because the Arabs in pre-Islamic times did not combine Hajj and Umrah. I think that the text mentioned by Ibn Hisham looks more logical. Ibn Athir, Ali Ibn Abi Alkarm (died 630 H./ 1233 AD) ***Al-Kaamel Fi Attaareekh***, Beirut, Second Edition 1387/1967, Part 2, p. 66. Cf. Al-Azaraqi, ***Akhbar Mecca***, Part 1, p. 105, he mentioned how Qussai Ibn Kilab entered Mecca after he came from Al-Sham: "Qussai waited till the beginning of the holy month, then he went with Qudha'a to Mecca in order to perform Hajj. When he finished Hajj, he stayed there in Mecca."

The text mentioned by Altha'alibi states clearly that Quraysh used to trade only with those who came to them in Hajj season, at Dhu Al-Majaz and Suq Ukaz in the holy months[1]. Crone has transliterated this text as follows:

"kanat Guraysh la tutajir illa maa man warada alayha Makkata Fi-Lmawasim wa-bi-Dhi L-Majaz wa – Suq ukaz wa Fi Ashhur- al hurum"[2].

Crone states that Hajj seasons (mawassim) mean the holy months. Concerning this point, there is no disagreement with her. Then she mentioned that people came only in the holy months to Dhu Al-Majaz and Ukaz. In this way she limited Hajj seasons to markets and she excluded Makkah. Then she said that the translation of the above transliterated paragraph should be as follows:

"The Quraysh used only to trade with those who came to them at Makkah in the pilgrim season, that is Dhu Al-Majaz and the market of Ukaz in the holy months."[3]

It is clear that she recognized the existence of pilgrimage in Makkah, but she did this so quickly without any discussion. Moreover, she misstated the original text and mentioned only part of the quotation.

The complete and clear quotation as mentioned in Altha'alibi book is as follows: "Quraysh used to trade only with those who came in Hajj season to Makkah, Dhu Al-Majaz, and Ukaz. In the holy months, Quraysh did not leave their homes and did not neglect the Ka'ba. They

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[1] Crone, op. cit., No. 47, pp. 177-178.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid.

were enthusiastic about their religion; they loved the Ka'ba and they provided services to all those who came to Makkah."[1]

The text provided by Altha'alibi is clear and explicit. He mentioned that Quraysh traded only with the Arabs who came to Makkah in the holy months at the markets of Dhu Al-Majaz and Ukaz. Quraysh did not leave Makkah in that period because they honored the Ka'ba and they were enthusiastic about their religion. They provided all needed services to everyone who came to Makkah, i.e., Al-Rifada and Al-Siqaya.

The text is clear and there is no need to make changes in words and meanings. Also, from a scientific point of view, the quotation should have been mentioned as it is without any fabrication. Regretfully Crone did not do so. Thus she violated the basics of sound scientific research. Above all, Almighty Allah connected Siqaya (providing pilgrims with water) and Hajj with Makkah. Almighty Allah said: "Do you consider the giving of drink to pilgrims, or the maintenance of The Sacred Mosque, equal (the pious service of) those who believe in Allah and the Last Day, and strive with might in the cause of Allah?

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[1] Al-Tha'alibi, Abu Mansour Abdulmalik Ibn Muhammad Ibn Ismail Al-Tha'alibi Al-Nisyabouri (350-429 H.), ***Thimar Alquloob Fi Al-Mudaf Walmansoub***, edited by Muhammad Abu Al-Fadl Ibrahim, Cairo, 1384-1965 AD, p. 115. This is the version Crone referred to. The publisher of Al-Tha'alibi book depended on three manuscripts: in one of them (Fi) was mentioned without (wa); whereas (wa = and) was mentioned in the other two manuscripts. I prefer what has been mentioned in the other two manuscripts, because Al-Tha'alibi meant to say that Quraysh did not leave at Hajj times.

They are not equal in the sight of Allah: and Allah guides not those who do wrong." (Surat At-Tauba, 19)

Thus, we can see that Hajj was connected with Makkah, the authority of giving permission to start Hajj used to pass from one family to another, like Bani Mur Al-Gouth Ibn Mur and later his sons, followed by Safwan and his sons[1]. Al-Ifadha from Muzdalifa was led by Edwan which they inherited one after another[2]. Ibn Habeeb mentioned that Arabs went to the Ka'ba for Hajj and Umrah. They used to circumambulate Ka'ba for one week; touch the black stone, do Sa'y between Safa and Marwa…and they did Talbiay (keep repeating the Pilgrim's chant), but some of them associated partners with Allah in their Talbiay.[3]

Then he added: "The Arabs used to stand on Arafat and leave it before the sunset and then come to Muzdalifa. Quraysh neither went out of Muzdalifa nor stood on Arafat, they say: 'We do not glorify other places in the same way as we glorify the sanctuary'. Then Qussai Ibn Kilab built the Mash'ar where some candles are lighted to

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[1] Ibn Athir, Al-Kaamel Fi At-Taareekh, Part 2, p. 17. Afif Al-Kindy said: "I came to Mecca in Hajj times in the very early stages of Da'wa."

[2] Ibn Hisham, ***As-Seerah An-Nabawyah***, Part 1, p. 121; Ibn Athir, Part 1, pp. 12-13; Al-Hamawi, ***Mu'jam Al-Buldan***, Part 5, pp. 186-187; Al-Tabari, Abdurrahman Ibn Jarir (died 310/923 AD). ***The History of Apostles and Kings***, Part 2, edited by Muhammad Abu Al-Fadl Ibrahim, Lebanon, no date, p. 257.

[3] Ibn Habeeb, Muhammad (died 425 H.), ***Al-Mihber***, edited by Elza Lekhten Shteiter, Beirut, no date, p. 311.

guide people when they come from Arafat to Muzdalifa, where they offer gifts and throw the pebbles.[1]"

After the Pilgrims spent their night at Muzdalifa, at sunrise, they move to Mina which is three miles away from Makkah. Pilgrims stay in Mina three days: tenth, eleventh, and twelfth of Dhul Hijjah. During these days, they throw the pebbles, sacrifice animals and shave their heads. Then they go to Makkah to circumambulate the Ka'ba (Tawaf Al-Ifadha). The Pilgrimage is completed only by performing all these rituals.

Qussai Ibn Kilab, the elder grandfather of the Prophet (pbuh), imposed annual taxes on Quraysh. Everyone ought to pay according to his income. This money was used to feed Pilgrims at Mina[2]. Also, providing Pilgrims with water was connected with the Ka'ba and the Pilgrims who came to perform Hajj[3] rites that begin and end by circumambulating the Holy Ka'ba[1].

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[1] Ibn Habeeb mentioned in Al-Mihber Al-Talbiay said by each tribe to its idol while circumambulating Kaaba. Cf. pp. 311-319, ***Azaraqi***, Mecca, Part 1, pp. 176-179.

[2] Alkalbi, Hisham Ibn Muhammad Ibn Al-Sa'eb (died 204 H./821 A.D.), ***Al-Asnam***, edited by Muhammad Abdulqader Ahmed, Ahmed Muhammad Obeid, Cairo, no date, p. 23; Ibn Habeeb, ***Al-Mihber***, p. 319. Concerning tribes which stand behind the Ka'ba cf. Ibn Habeeb, ***Muhammad, Al-Munammaq Fi Akhbar Quraysh***, edited by Khursheed Ahmed Farouq, Delhi, India: 1384-1964 A.D., p. 179, Al-Tabari, ***Tareekh***, p. 2, p. 260.

[3] Feeding pilgrims (Rifada) was not new to Mecca at Qussai times. Narrators mentioned the Amr Ibn Luhi, chief of Khuza'a, fed pilgrims and offered meals during Hajj times. Also, they said that he might slaughter ten thousand camels, and provided clothing for ten thousand people a year. Food was cooked with ghee and he also offered honey to pilgrims. Cf. Ibn Al-Athir,

Third, Crone used another argument to deny Pilgrimage to Makkah before Islam and to show that pilgrimage means Arab fairs in the three markets near Makkah. This argument was that the Prophet (pbuh), in the early days of his mission, visited these markets to call for Islam. Crone took this event as an evidence to prove her doubts[2].

Of course, the Prophet (pbuh) visited these places in an attempt to get rid of the Quraysh oppression and in order to disseminate Islam to the greatest possible number of Arab tribes who came to Makkah in these seasons. These seasons were considered as a forum for the Arabian Peninsula with its tribes, acts of worship and cultures. Not all who came to these trade centers had the intention to perform Hajj. Therefore, the Prophet (pbuh) preferred to go to them at their places to spread the message of Almighty Allah[3].

Al-Kaamel, Part 2, p. 182; ***Al-Azaraqi***, Mecca, p. 100. Also, accounts mentioned that Amr Ibn Luhi was the one who the one who introduced the worship of idols to Mecca and its whereabouts, cf. Al-Hamawi, ***Mu'jam***, Part 5, pp. 367-368.

[1] Ibn Hisham, ***The Prophet's Biography***, Part 2, p. 202.

[2] Crone, op. cit., No. 39, p. 177.

[3] Concerning the meeting of Amr Ibn Absa with the Prophet (pbuh) at Ukaz where turned to Islam there, cf. Ibn Al-Athir, ***Al-Kamel***, p. 2, p. 38. Concerning the meeting with the tribes, cf. p. 65; also Atabari, ***Al-Tareekh***, p. 2, pp. 348-360. Concerning the meeting with the tribes of Kinda, Bani Hanifa, Kalb, Bani Amer Ibn Sa'asa'ah and Al-Khazrej, cf. Ibn Athir, ***Al-Kamel***, p. 2, pp. 65, 38; Al-Fagani, Saeed, ***Markets of the Arabs in Pre-Islam and Islam Times***, Cairo, Second Edition, pp. 80-81.

Concerning the sanctity of the three markets, the Arabs were divided into three groups: The first group deemed injustice permissible in the holy months.

Fourth, in claiming that the Pilgrimage did not exist at Makkah before Islam, Crone depended on evidence that Pilgrims went to the above mentioned markets while they were in the state of Ihram. According to her, this evidence supports the idea that that Quraysh were in a state of Ihram when Al-Fojar war broke out; Barras was the one who ignited this war[1]. Ibn Habeeb confirmed that: " Quraysh go to Dhu-Majaz only in a state of Ihram."[2]

In addition, the way the Quraysh dressed when they visited theses markets near Makkah was not a surprise. This is due to the fact that they glorified the holy months. The Quraysh and the Arabs "considered it a great sin to do

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They committed all kinds of sins: killing, looting, prostitution, and they did not respect the holiness of these months. This group was called "Al-Muhleen". These tribes are: Uzd, Tayy, Bakr Ibn Abd Minat, people from Bani Amer Ibn Sa'sa'a and from Khuthm and Guda'ah, in addition to Al-Sa'aleek and those who were dismissed from their tribes.

The second group preserved the sanctity of the holy months and caretakers of the Ka'ba; they kept themselves away from wrongdoing and helped those who were wronged.

The third group deemed fighting the first group "Al-Muhleen" permissible; Salsal ibn Aus from bani Amr Ibn Tamim is the one who legalize this act. Tayy and Bani Assad were among this group. Cf. Al-Marzogi, Ahmed Ibn Ibn Muhammad Ibn Hassan Al-Asfahani (died 421 H./1030 A.D.), ***Al-Azmena Walamekina***, p. 2, Cairo, no date, p. 166. Concerning the meeting of Amr Ibn Absa with the prophet (pbuh) cf. Ibn Athir, ***Al-Kaamel***, Part 2, p. 38. Concerning the meeting with the tribes cf. Ibid., p. 65; Al-Tabari, ***Tareekh***, Part 2, pp. 348 -360. Concerning the meeting with the tribes of Kinda, Bani Hanifa, Kalb, Bani Amer Ibn Sa'asa'ah and Al-Khazrej, cf. Ibn Athir, ***Al-Kaamel***, p. 2, pp. 65, 38; Al-Agani, ***Markets of the Arabs in Pre-Islam and Islam Times***, Damascus, 1962, pp. 1, 80.

[1] Crone, op. cit., p. 173.

[2] Ibn Habeeb, ***Al-Munammaq***, p. 196.

something prohibited or to transgress against one another in the holy months and in the sacred places."[1] Of course, Quraysh were honored by being in service and custodians of the Ka'ba. At the same time, Quraysh used to arrange preparations to perform Hajj. Along with the Arabs, they maintained Hajj rites since Ibrahim and Ismail (peace be upon them) raised the foundation of the House (the Ka'ba), though they brought pagan rituals into the religion of Ibrahim (pbuh).

After Quraysh invented *Alhoms* (people who are enthusiastic about their religion), they added many things to confirm their commitment to the holiness of the Ka'ba and honoring Pilgrims. They said:: "People who came from other areas should not eat the food they brought with them to the Ka'ba, if they came to perform Hajj and Umrah: They should circumambulate Ka'ba for the first time dressed in *Alhoms* clothes. If they did not find these clothes, they should circumambulate the Ka'ba naked. If a man or woman did not find *Alhoms* clothes and he/she circumambulated the Ka'ba dressed in everyday clothes, then he/she should throw away these clothes after circumambulating the Ka'ba. These clothes should not be used again and should not be touched by this person or anyone else. The Arabs used to call these clothes (the thrown away clothes). Quraysh prompted the Arabs to do this and the Arabs followed this tradition: they stood on

[1] Ibn Hisham, Part 1, p. 192.

Arafat, circumambulated the Ka'ba - men naked, but women put on loose open garments."[1]

Fifth, Crone mentioned that the Ka'ba was equal to the idol Allat in "Taif" and Uzza in "Nakhla", and she thinks that they were not just sanctuaries[2]. Here, Crone did not mention the sources she depended on in deciding this equality. In fact, people of the Arab Peninsula in pre-Islamic times had sanctuaries to which Pilgrims used to go. The most famous of which were: "Alokeissor" house[3] in the outskirts of Syria for the tribes of Qudha'a, Lukham, Jetham and Amella; "Thu Khalassa"[4] house at Kubala between Makkah and Tai'f for Douse, Jatha'am and Bujeilla; "Rea'am" house at Sana'a for Himyar and people of Yemen[5]; "Rudi Almustwager house' for Bani Rabi'a Ibn Ka'ab Ibn Sa'ad Ibn Zaid Ibn Minat Ibn Tamim[6]; Uza was at Nakhla for Quraysh[7]; Allat was for Thaqif at Ta'if[8]; Minat was for Aous and Khazrej[9]; Fils was for Tayy[10]; and Dhu alkabat was for Bakr anf Taqleb Bani Wa'al. But

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[1] Ibn Hisham, ***The Prophet's Biography***, Part 1, p. 202; Al-Azaraqi, Mecca, Part 1, pp. 180-182.

[2] Crone, op. cit., p. 174.

[3] Ibn Al-Kalbi, Al-Asnam, p. 53.

[4] Ibid., pp. 49-50; Ibn Habeeb, ***Al-Mihabbar***, pp. 317, 312.

[5] Ibn Alkalbi, ***Al-Asnam***, pp. 27-28; Ibn Kathir, Part 2, p. 192.

[6] Ibn Alkalbi, ***Al-Asnam***, pp. 45-46; Al-Hamawi, ***Mu'jam Al-Buldan***, Part 5, p. 4; Ibn Habeeb, ***Al-Mihber***, p. 315.

[7] Ibn Al-Kalbi, p. 33-43; Ibn Kathir, Part 2, p. 192.

[8] Ibn Al-Kalbi, ***Al-Asnam***, p. 31; Al-Hamawi, ***Mu'jam Al-Buldan***, Part 5, p. 4; Ibn Habeeb, ***A-Mmihber***, p. 315.

[9] Ibn Al-Kalbi, ***Al-Asnam***, p. 28; Al-Hamawi, ***Mu'jam Al-Buldan***, p. 5, p. 205.

[10] Ibn Habeeb, ***Al-Mihber***, p. 315; Ibn Al-Kalbi, ***Al-Asnam***, p. 70.

none of these houses influenced the Arabs as deeply as the Ka'ba did[1]. Ibn Alkalbi mentioned that when a man from Juhayna called Abdaddar Ibn Hudeib said to his tribe:"Let us build a house at a land named Hawra'a so that it will be as important as the Ka'ba and it will attract people, his tribe rejected this idea completely."[2] Also, Islamic sources did not hide the fact that some people from Adnan, Mudhar and Quraysh went to Nakhla to sanctify Uzza, they also visited Allat at Taif and Manat at Qudha'a[3].

Ibn Ishaaq wrote about the origins of worshipping idols: "The first time Bani Ismail worshipped stones was when one of them travelled outside Makkah, at the times when they were powerless, and they wanted to travel through lands. They carried with them one of the stones of the Ka'ba, and wherever they settled, they put down this stone and circumambulated it in the same way as they circumambulated the Ka'ba. After that, they worshipped stones which they liked and admired. Then, they replaced the religion of Ibrahim by another religion, namely worshiping idols. They went astray from the right path as it was the case of the nations who became before them."[4] The same thing was true for other people. Despite the fact that the Jews were aware of Almighty Allah, the Jews of Eliphantin (Aswan in the South of Egypt) worshipped

[1] Ibn Kathir, Al-Kaamel, p. 192. Concerning what the Arabs used to say when they visit these idols, cf. Ibn Habeeb, ***Al-Mihber***, pp. 311-319

[2] Ibn Al-Kalbi, ***Al-Asnam***, p. 58.

[3] Al-Kalbi, ***Al-Asnam***, p. 28. Concerning the origins of worshipping idols before Islam, cf. Al-Kalbi, Ibid., p. 48.

[4] Ibn Hisham, ***The Prophet's Biography***, Part 1, pp. 77-78.

idols. Aramaeans documents which were discovered in Eliphantin showed that they worshipped five gods.[1]

The news of the Ka'ba was transmitted to the Arabs, generation after generation since the time when its bases were raised.[2] The Ka'ba was a sanctuary for all people and everybody was allowed to worship there. Because the Ka'ba was Allah’s House, the Quraysh allowed all people regardless of their sects to circumambulate it and to devote themselves to worship. The sanctity of the house around Ka'ba per se was established regardless of the idols which were set up by its sides. The reader, here, should not be surprised to know that idols were set in Allah’s House at Makkah before Islam. The Arabs were not the only people who combined between the remains of Ibrahim’s (pbuh) religion and paganism.

Al-Samiri set up a calf for the Jews to worship in addition to the worship of Almighty Allah, although they had a divine doctrine, and Prophet Moses (pbuh) was still alive and among them. If this was the situation of the Jews, then what would be the situation of the Arabs when there was a long period of time which separated between them and the true religion of Ibrahim. Hence Crone confused many aspects of paganism. However, the Arabs did not call any of the idols "House Lord", and when they mentioned "House Lord", they meant to say a Lord who is above all other Lords. On the other hand, every idol had

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[1] Cowley, ***Aramaic Papyri of the 5th Cent. B.C***., Oxford, 1923; Driver (G. R.), ***Aramaic Document of the Cent, B.C.***, 1924.

[2] Taban Assad Abu Karb built the house and did the covering of the Ka'ba, Ibn Hisham, Part 1, p. 20.

its own house. Hence came the supremacy of the Ka'ba at Makkah; which the Arabs viewed as the House of Allah, The Creator, The Creative. The Arabs claimed that the worship of idols might bring them nearer to Allah. Almighty Allah said: "But those who take for protectors others than Allah (say): ‘We only serve them in order that they may bring us nearer to Allah’" (Surat Az-Zumar, 3).[1]

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[1] It was clear from Arabic poetry that the Arabs were aware of Almighty Allah. When Aws Ibn Hajr swore by Al-Lat, he said: “I swear by Allat and Uzza and who worshiped them; I swear by Allah who was greater than them.” Cf. Alhamawi, Mu'jam Albuldan. Durham Ibn Zeid Alawsi said: “Myself and Lord of happy Uzah, and Allah Who glorified His house.” Ibn Al-Kalbi, Al-Asnam, p. 36, footnote 2.

Khidash Ibn Zuhair Al-Amri said to Athath Ibn Wahshi Al-Khatha'ami concerning a promise between them which the later did not fulfill: “Between me and him, I reminded him of Allah. The period of time was not so long if he really wanted to remember his promise.”

Ibn Al-Kalbi, ***Al-Asnam***, p. 50. Also, when digging a water well in Mecca before Islam, a poet said: “May Allah bless the waters, which places I know: Jirab, Maloum, Badr, and Al-Gamre.”

Jirab, Maloum, Badr, and Algamre are names of old water wells at Mecca. Ibn Hishan, ***The Pprophet’s Biography***, Part 1, p. 148.

Zaid Ibn Harith, when he abandoned worshipping Allat, Uza and other idols before the mission of the Prophet, said: “A lord or a thousand lords should I worship, when matters are so divided.”

I set aside Allat an Uzza; so will do the one who is patient and tolerant.

I neither worship Uzza nor visit the idols of Bani Amr.

Preserve fear of your Allah; once preserved it will never be unfruitful.

Paradise will be the house of pious people; hellfire will be the house of disbelievers.

Disbelievers will be humiliated in their lives, and after death they will experience unbearable things.

Cf. Yakut Al-Hamawi, ***Mu'jam***, Part 5; Ibn Habeeb, ***Al-Munammaq***, p. 315, he said: "All these idols in Arab counties were worshipped along with

Quraysh admitted the sanctity of Makkah. Also, they gave people of the sanctuary some rights which can be compared to the rights of citizenship in old ages. Quraysh called these people who have these rights the enthusiastic people (*Alhoms*), who said: "We are sons of Ibrahim; people of the sanctuary; caretakers of the Ka'ba, inhabitants of Makkah. None of the Arabs has the rights we enjoy or the rank we have. No one is acknowledged by the Arabs like us; so do not honor anything of the land which lies beyond the sanctuary in the same way as honoring the Ka'ba. They neither stood on Arafat nor did Ifadha (dispersing from Arafat), though they know that these things are part of Hajj rituals and the religion of Ibrahim (pbuh). Also, they thought that all Arabs should stand on Arafat and disperse from it, but they said: "we people of the sanctuary should not go out of this holy place; nothing should be honored in the same way as we honor this holy place. We are the enthusiastic people and we are part of the people of sanctuary." Later on, they granted the same rights the enjoyed to all Arabs who were born in the sanctuary or beyond."[1]

Almighty Allah." Almighty Allah said: "They serve beside Allah what can hurt then not nor profit them, and they say: "These are our intercessors with Allah." Say: "Do you indeed inform Allah of something He knows not, in the heavens or on earth? Glory to him and far is He above the partners they ascribe (to Him)!" (Surat Yunus, 18). Also Almighty Allah said: "Is it no to Allah that sincere devotion is due? But those who take for protectors others than Allah (say): "We only serve them in order that they may bring us nearer to Allah" (Surat Az-Zumar, 3); concerning those who followed the religion of Ibrahim (pbuh), cf. Ibn Habeeb, ***Al-Munammaq***, pp. 175-176.

[1] Ibn Hisham, ***The Prophet's Biography***, Part 1, p. 219; Ibn Habeeb, ***Al-Munammaq***, pp. 143-146; Al-Hamawi. ***Mu'jam***, Part 5, p. 184.

Quraysh expanded by joining other Arab tribes. This was done by including their sons-in-law in the enthusiastic people. Thus the husband of a Qurashi woman followed her tribe. Undoubtedly, this clever policy followed by Quraysh made Makkah surrounded by tribes of the enthusiastic people. Also, they made the sanctuary a peaceful land which was described in the Holy Qur'an as follows: "Do not then they see that we have made a sanctuary secure, and that men being snatched away all around them?" (Surat Al-Ankbut,67). This policy provided a golden opportunity for Makkan trade to flourish.

If the Makkan sanctuary was equal to Allat in Taif and Uzza in Nakhla, then why did the Persians visit the sanctuary, perform Hajj, and bring money and jewelry to the Ka'ba?; "Two golden deer, jewelry, golden swords and a lot of gold were brought as a gift by Sasan Ibn Babek"[1]. This means that the Persians were well aware of the high rank of the Makkan sanctuary.

Sixth, Abraha Al-Habashi started his campaign from Yemen to destroy the Ka'ba. He swore he would destroy it[2] in order to turn away Arab pilgrims from Makkah to

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[1] Al-Mas'udi, Abu Ali Ibn Al-Hussein Ibn Ali (died 346 H./957-958 A.D.), ***Murooj Al-Dahab Wa Maaden Al-Jawhar***, edited by Sharl Bella, Beirut, 1966, Part 1, p. 242.

[2] Ibn Al-Kalbi mentioned that Abraha built a church at Sana'a which he called Galees. It was built of marble and gilded wood. Then Abraha wrote to the king of Ethiopia, he said: "I built for you a church that none built like it, and I will not leave the Arabs till I turn them away from the Pilgrimage they do" (Ibn Alkalbi, Alasnam, p. 45). Galees is derived from the Greek name Ecclesia = Έκκλησία which means parliament in Greek in Homer times - ninth or eighth century B.C. It is well known that Ethiopians were orthodox

Qulleis church which he built in Najran. Ibn Athir and Al-Azaraqi mentioned that Quraysh established Alhamasa system (enthusiastic people) in order to organize the defense of the Ka'ba, and to benefit from the fame they acquired among the Arabs after the failure of the above mentioned campaign.[1] Thus Alhamasa made the Ka'ba as a starting point for a great number of Arab tribes to be behind Quraysh leadership. Merchants met peacefully at Makkah and some Arabs volunteered to defend the Ka'ba, as Salsal Ibn Aws Al-Tamimi did[2]. Also Zuhair Ibn Janeb Al-Kalbi did the same thing when he destroyed the house which the Ghatafan built for themselves instead of Ka'ba.[3]

Seventh, Crone adopted another approach. This time she introduced a text mentioned by Nonnossus in one of his books which was lost. Photius mentioned this book in his Bibliotheque[4]. This text reads: "Most of the Saracens, those of the Phoinikon and those beyond it and beyond the Taurenian mountains, consider as a sacred a place

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Christians and their church was affiliated to Alexandria in Egypt till the death of Emperor Heile Silasi in the last third of the twentieth century. Concerning the Greek term, cf. Liddle (H. G.) and Scott (R.), ***A Greek English Lexicon***, Oxford, 1968, p. 509.

[1] Ibn Athir, Al-Kaamel, Part 1, p. 451-2; Al-Azaraqi, Mecca, p. 149.

[2] Ibn Al-Kalbi, ***Al-Asnam***, p. 58.

[3] Ibn Al-Kalbi said: Ibn Dalem Ibn Assad Ibn Rabiaa built a house at Ghatafan land and called it Bussan. He took a stone from Safa and another one from Marwa and built on them Safa and Marwa. Ghatafan and who came after them used to worship this house. In pre-Islamic era, Zuhair Ibn Janeb invaded Ghatafan land and destroyed this house completely, ***Al-Asnam***, p. 70. See also, Ibn Habeeb, ***Al-Mihber***, p. 316.

[4] ***Nonnosus*** cited by Photius, Bibliotheque, edited and translated by R.Henery, Paris 1959, Vol. I, 5 (f), cited in Crone, op. cit., p. 197, No. 127.

dedicated to I do not know what god, and assemble there twice a year. Of these gatherings, the first lasts a whole month and goes on until the middle of spring…the other lasts two months… while these gatherings last, they live, says Nonnosus, in complete peace not only with each other, but also with all the people who live in their country. They claimed that even the wild beasts live in peace with men and, what is more, among themselves…

The Taurenian mountains ought to be Jabal Tayyi. If so, the sanctuary was presumably located somewhere in the north. As noted before, Epiphanius month of *Aggathalbaeitb (Hijjat al-bayt)* also suggests the existence of a pilgrim center in the north. In Crone's opinion this means: "It would, of course, also be simplistic in the sense that there must have been several pilgrim centers in pre-Islamic Arabia. But if we choose not to justify Nonnosus' *haram* with the pilgrim fairs, we must acknowledge that a sanctuary of major importance in Arabia disappeared without leaving any trace whatsoever in the tradition. And if we similarly choose not to identify it the first sanctuary of Islam, this silence becomes particularly odd: a rival *haram* of such importance ought to have been an object of incentives."[1]

By simple analysis of this text we notice that the author mentioned "Most of the Saracens, those of the Phoinikon and those beyond it and beyond the Taurenian mountains". According to Crone, the Taurenian mountains ought to be Tayyi mountain and since Tayyi is located in Najd Heights, meaning that Hejaz and the Ka'ba are

[1] Crone, op. cit., No. 128, p. 197.

among the lands located beyond these mountains. This supports the hypothesis that the *haram* she referred to before is in fact the very Ka'ba at Makkah. The visit of the sanctuary lasts three months (two months for Hajj: Dhu Al-Qi'da and Dhu al-Hijjah, and Rajab for Umrah). Moreover, what would be the sanctuary which diverse peoples of the area visited, stayed in Ihram during their visit, and lived in peace if it was not the self-same Ka'ba at Makkah? Epiphanius reference to the month of *Aggathalbaeitb (Hijjat al-bayt)* is likely to favor the assumption that this reference means the Ka'ba at Makkah where Hajj can be performed within specified days from the month of Dhu Al-Hijjah.

Moreover, all Islamic sources never mentioned directly or indirectly another sanctuary which gained such a high rank for all Arabs as the Ka'ba did. These sources mentioned all idols which the Arabs worshipped in pre-Islamic times and the houses which were specified for some of those idols, as we explained before. This means that Islamic sources did not hide the existence of another sanctuary which might be as important as the Ka'ba. This conclusion is confirmed by the fact that none of the classical sources (Greek and Roman), with the exception of Nonnosus, mentioned the existence of such a sanctuary which Crone located in the north. In doing so, Crone contradicted her explanation of Taurenian mountains which, in her opinion, ought to be Tayyi mountain at the Najd Heights.

In order to confirm her approach, she cited some indications included in Islamic resources which refer to the existence of trees and herbage at Makkah. She used

this as an evidence to conclude that the surroundings of the holy house should be fertile, unlike the desert environment of Makkah. Here, she overlooked an important geographical fact mentioned by Al-Asfahani: Rain at Makkah (as it is the case nowadays) might be very heavy, especially when streams are formed, so it will destroy houses and damage roads. If this is the case, then it is not surprising to find at Makkah herbage or trees which match the climate there. Despite this fact, this narrow herbal belt does not take Makkah out of its desert surroundings.[1]

Eighth, Crone was not satisfied claiming that pilgrimage in pre-Islamic times was just visiting the three markets. She also tried to minimize the role of the Quraysh in trade, and their distinguished role in the three markets. She said: "We may start by considering whether Makkah was a pilgrim fair. The tradition is almost unanimous that it was not a pilgrim fair. A famous list of pre-Islamic fairs some sixteen fairs as having been of major importance in Arabia before Islam. Not one of the several versions of this list mentions Makkah." Then she continued: "The stories about the wars of Fojar are not about commerce at all. They are set at Ukaz because this is where people got together, not because trade was conducted there." She concluded about Fojar war by

[1] Crone, op. cit., No. 134, pp. 188-189. Concerning plants covering the Makkah sanctuary area though ages till the present time, cf. the published Ph.D. dissertation, ***The Ecology of Mecca Sanctuary Area*, *A Biogeographical Study***, by Awatif Bint Al-Shareef Shujaa Al-Harethi, King Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University, University Dissertations Series, No. 71, Riyadh, 1427/2006.

saying: "All this is typical of tribal war, not of struggle for commercial supremacy; and if commercial supremacy had been involved, Quraysh would scarcely be said to have achieved it."[1]

It is not true that the list of markets cited by Ibn Habeeb and Al-Marzuqi did not include Makkah. Three of these markets: Ukaz, Dhul-Majaz, and Majanna were very close to Makkah, as if they were Makkan markets. Majanna market was only three miles away from Makkah. Dhul-Majaz was a place in Makkah in the direction of Kabkeb which is a part of Huthail area. As for Ukaz, accounts mentioned that it was "the greatest of Arab markets". It was in one of Taif suburbs and the area of this market became bigger or smaller depending on the size of the crowd. Here, it is very clear that Crone is attempting to take advantage of the fact that readers have no idea about distances between the three markets. This attempt aims at giving readers the impression that Makkah does not exist among these markets; which is completely untrue. The Quraysh was seen and heard all over these markets especially in Ukaz which was connected with them and was named "Ukaz Quraysh", as Ibn Habeeb mentioned.[2] Al-Marzuqi mentioned "That Ukaz was one of the greatest markets of the Arabs; the Quraysh, Ghatafan, Hawazen, Khuza'a, Alahabeesh, Odal, Al-Mustalaq and many other Arab tribes used to stay there…There were no taxes, no

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[1] Crone, op. cit., pp. 170, 145, 147, respectively.

[2] Ibn Habeeb, ***Al-Mihber***, p. 427; Ibn Asaker, Thiqatuddin Abu Al-Qasem Ali Ibn Al-Hussein (died 571 H.), ***Refining Great History of Damascus***, arranged by Abdulqader Badran, Beirut, 1399 H./1979 A.D., pp. 4, 417.

guarding and there were many things which do not exist in Arab markets."[1]

When Crone said: "The stories about the wars of Fojar are not about commerce at all. They are set at Ukaz because this is where people got together, not because trade was conducted there", she overlooked the fact that commerce was the main reason for going to Ukaz. Ukaz was one of the most famous Arab commercial markets and had a variety of goods: Yemeni garments which were striped with silk, saffron, dyestuff, gum, incense, onyx, myrrh, spices and perfume - all came from Yemen. Concerning Omanis, they had pearls and Hajar dates which they brought from Bahrain. People from Syria used to bring oil, raisins, flour, colors and purple from Saida and Tripoli. Sesame oil, golden and silver jewelry came from Petra. Bedouins used to sell wool, hair, fat, fluff, sheep, camels, leather and shoes. In this market, there were perfumers carrying with them perfumes, medicine, herbs and musk; vets who treat animals; carpenters; blacksmiths; and dealers in textiles who sell clothes and weapons.

Khatian and Rudainyah spears were very famous. The former were made in Khatia town of Bahrain coast and the later were made by a woman called Rudainya from Bahrain. As for wine, the most famous of which came from Petra,Gaza, and Alandarine was mentioned by the

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[1] Al-Marzuqi, ***Al-Azminah Walamkinah***, Part 2, p. 165; Ibn Habeeb, ***Al-Mihber***, pp. 263-268; cf. Al-Afaghani, ***Arab Markets in Islam and Pre-Islam***, where he listed all names of Arab markets included in Islamic resources, Cairo, 1423 H/1993 A.D., pp. 217-226.

poet Amr Ibn Kalthoum at the beginning of his suspended poem. In the last few years before Islam Ethiopian salves and Syrian handicrafts trade flourished widely. Goods in the market were exempted from taxes and there was something like the commercial court, especially after Al-Fudhoul alliance and the growing influence of Makkah as a result of the Fojar wars. The judicial authority was in the hands of Hawazin before the Fojar wars. But after these wars it was with Kinanah.

The justice of the court and the security of the holy month spread peace among all visitors of the market. This prosperity was logical and expected. There were notaries public who wrote contracts and business transactions; also advertisement was available in order to slander covenants violators and cheaters. All Arab tribes came to this market: from Syria, Iraq, The Gulf, Yemen and other neighboring countries. As this market was crowded, merchants gained great profits. Al-Marzuqi said: "In the thirty-fifth year after "the year of the elephant", great crowds of people of Nizar Al-Yemen came to this market. This phenomenon has never been witnessed before, and as a result, people sold all their commercial goods". Every tribe had its own place and dwelling areas, and people together discussed diverse commercial and literary issues.[1]

Thus, it is clear that the main purpose of Arabs meetings at Ukaz was trade. Simply, they did not go there

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[1] Al-Marzuqi, ***Al-Azminah***, Part 2, pp. 9-168; Amr Ibn Kalthoum said about the town of Andarine in his suspended poem: "Oh maid! Get up and give me a drink with your plate, and leave behind nothing of Andarine wine." Cf. Al-Zuwzni, Abdulla Al-Hasan Ibn Ahmed, edited by Muhammad Al-Fadili, Siada- Beirut, no date, p. 171.

just for the sake of meeting and chatting. Crone overlooked the fact that Quraysh and their allies started the first Fojar war which continued for three days and the second Fojar war which lasted five days. This means that Quraysh roused these wars. Ibn Hisham, in the Prophet Biography, said: "This war broke out because Urwa Al-Rahal sheltered a group of camels which belongs to Al-Nu'man Ibn Al-Munzir…Al-Barradh said to Amr: "Did you shelter these camels from Kinanah?". Amr answered: "Yes, and from all creatures."…then a man came to the Quraysh and said: "Al-Barradh killed Urwa in the holy month at Ukaz. The Quraysh then moved away without the knowledge of Hawazin. But when Hawazin came to know what happened they followed Quraysh and overtook them before they entered the Ka'ba. They fought till night and then the Quraysh entered Ka'ba and Hawazin stopped the fight."[1]

These wars seem to represent disputes over commercial influence between Quraysh and Hawazin. Taking into consideration that Ukaz is located within Hawazin land. Crone tried to undervalue the victory Quraysh achieved when she said: "*Quraysh could scarcely be said to have achieved it.*" Despite her recognition of this victory she denied it once again when she said: "*The fact that one of these episodes happened to involve the capture of a caravan does not mean that we must attach deep economic or political significance to it. No doubt there were frequently tribal rivalries behind this kind of event, but we are making false economic history by*

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[1] Ibn Hisham, Part 1, pp. 199-201; ***Sahab, Victor, Elaph Quraysh: Summer and winter Trips***, Beirut, 1992, pp. 214-222.

elevating such rivalries into struggles for long-term commercial or political objectives."[1] Crone also neglected completely one of the results of Quraysh victory in the Fojar wars, namely, the campaign of Al-Nu'man Ibn Al-Munzir against Bani Amer Ibn Sa'sa'a.

Bani Amer is a branch of Hawazin and they were part of the people who were enthusiastic about their religion. They supported the Quraysh in the Fojar wars and thus participated in the defeat of their own tribe. Readers can easily notice that Crone did not mention anything about the Dhi Qar battle. This battle shows clearly the connection of commercial competition and relationships between Arabs and Persians. Ibn Habeeb said: "Kisra sent horses carrying goods to Ukaz, but Banu Tamim and Banu Shaiban seized these horses. Then Kisra sent horsemen under the leadership of Wahraz. to fight Tamim and Shaiban, and the Persians were defeated in this battle."[2]

The influential tribe of Hawazin possessed Ukaz, and the situation continued to be so without any objection from Quraysh. People of Al-Hira avoided sending their caravans through Makkah. Instead they sent their caravans immediately to Ukaz through Taif. Then the Fojar wars broke out and Makkah gained power over Ukaz.

Ninth, it is clear from this discussion that Makkah and its sanctuary were the destination of the Arabs, where they setup their idols. The Ka'ba was unrivaled by any other sanctuary in all the Arabian Peninsula. Even Al-

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[1] Crone, op. cit. pp. 147-148

[2] Ibn Habeeb, Al-Munammaq, p. 320.

Qulleis, which the Ethiopian Abraha built in Yemen in order to divert pilgrims from Makkah, was never equal to the Ka'ba. With the increase of Quraysh's influence, the Arabs became more enthusiastic for their Ka'ba, especially after the failure of Abraha campaign, on one hand.

On the other hand, Makkah became commercially more influential and the Arabs gained a lot of profits. Arab pilgrims used to go to Makkah and pilgrimage started and ended there. As for the fairs, they were the commercial markets of Ukaz, Dhul-Majaz, and Majanna where the Arabs used to meet. Those markets were near Makkah and they were not, as Crone claimed, "the pilgrimage places before Islam". For Arabs, it was not a defect to combine between the three activities of trade, religiosity, and pilgrimage in Makkah.

The same thing happened in Greece; as the Olympic games were connected with their great religious temples since its first session in 776 B.C. At the top of these temples were Zeus in Olympia, Elis province, west of Peloponnese; Apollon's temple and his prophecy at Delphi. The same practice used to happen during the Ishmus sports session in Ishmus near the city of Cornith in the middle of Greece which was arranged to pay homage to Poseidod, god of seas, with whom Cointh city was associated. Finally, the Nemean games, named after the city of Nemea in Argolis in the south of Greece were held to honor Nemean Zeus.[1]

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[1] ***The Oxford Classical Dictionary***, Oxford, 1957, arts: Olympic Games, p. 621; Delphigames, p. 261, Isthamia, p. 461, Neaman Games, p. 601. Cf.

These sessions were held at one of the previous centers once a year. While the games were going on, there was a holy temporary truce among all Greek cities; according to which all aggressive acts were ceased and peace prevailed. This truce was called "cessation of hostilities = έκεχειρία = ekecheirai". Greeks used to come to these temples not only to visit them and hold sport events, but also to exhibit their industrial and intellectual products.

Herodotus (the father of history) read his book about Persian wars at Delphi and Phedias brought with him the best of what he had manufactured. In other words, Ukaz was similar to these markets; it was connected with a holy place. It gathered all the people of the area, and the time specified for its visit was inviolable. In conclusion, no one has ever claimed, as Crone did, the discrimination between visiting temples and visiting markets which were closely associated.

Ali, Abdullatif Ahmed, ***Greek History, Helenian Age***, Part 1, Cairo, 1973, pp. 112-120.

The Third Theme

The Role of Quraysh in the World Eastern Trade

Crone begins the discussion of the Quraysh trade issue, stating that: *"We may start by considering the evidence for where the Meccans operated. The secondary literature generally informs us that they operated in Syria, Yemen, Ethiopia, and Iraq, linking all four regions in a single commercial network. This claim rests on Ibn al-Kalbi's ilaf - tradition, which goes as follows: Meccan trade used to be purely local. Non-Arab traders would bring their goods to Mecca, and the Meccans would buy them for resale partly among themselves and partly among their neighbours. This was how things remained until Hashim, Muhammad's great-grandfather, went to Syria, where he attracted the attention of the Byzantine emperor by cooking tharid, a dish unknown to the non-Arabs.*

Having become friendly with the emperor, he persuaded the latter to grant Quraysh permission to sell Hijazi leather and clothing in Syria on the ground that this would be cheaper for Syrians. Next he returned to Mecca, concluding agreements with the tribes on the way. These agreements were known as Ilafs, and granted Quraysh safe passage through the territories of the tribes in question. In return, Quraysh undertook to act as commercial agents on behalf of these tribes, collecting their goods on the way to Syria and handing over what they had fetched on the way back. Hashim accompanied the first Meccan caravan to Syria, seeing to the fulfilment of the agreements and settling Quraysh in the towns and/or villages (qura) of Syria; it was on this journey that

he died in Gaza. His three brothers concluded similar treaties with the rulers of Persia, Yemen, and Ethiopia, enabling Quraysh to trade in safety, and similar agreements with the tribes on the way, enabling them to travel to the countries in question without fear. All died in places implicitly presented as relevant to their trade. It was thanks to the activities of Hashim and his brothers that the Meccans got rich".[1]

After she reviewed some - and not all - of what had come in the Islamic sources, which she called "the narrated stories", she said: "Stories made up without concern for what was actually remembered cannot be used for a reconstruction of the past with which they purport to deal: those on the beginning and end of Meccan trade should both be rejected. Outright rejection of famous claims made in the Islamic tradition is, however, regarded as unacceptably radical by most Islamicists. Let us assume then that there is some historical recollection behind these stories after all, or rather behind one of them; inasmuch as it cannot be the case that the Meccans both did and did not trade outside Mecca on the eve of Islam, one of the two stories must be fundamentally wrong. Which one remembers right?[2]

Crone continued that: *"Meccan trade was a local trade in the sense that the commodities sold were of Arabian origin and destined for consumption in Arabia itself or immediately outside it. Some sources present the transactions of the Meccans as an export trade in return*

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[1] Crone, pp. 109-110

[2] Crone, op. cit., p. 112

for which bullion was carried back, whereas others on the contrary describe it as an import trade for which bullion was carried to Syria.' But whatever the exact role of bullion in their transactions, most accounts envisage the Meccans as having sold commodities in Syria and elsewhere with a view to carrying others back. We do not know what they sold in Ethiopia, except perhaps skin, nor do we know what they sold in the Yemen, except for donkeys.

But Ethiopia can perhaps be discounted for purposes of Meccan (as opposed to Qurashi) trade; and though more information about Qurashi transactions in Yemen would have been welcome, we do at least know that in Syria they sold hides, skins, leather goods of other kinds , clothing, perhaps also animals and clarified butter on occasion, as well as perfume. The commodities specified are in agreement with the modern observation that insofar as Arabia produces anything in excess of its domestic consumption, it is almost entirely due to the nomads and mountaineers. And what the Meccans carried back was also goods of the kind one would expect. From Syria and Egypt, we are told, they imported fine cloth and clothing, arms, grain, perhaps also oil, fruit and perfume on occasion.

From Yemen they likewise obtained fine cloth and clothing, as well as slaves, ultimately from Ethiopia, "Indian swords, possibly foodstuffs, and certainly the perfume that they would occasionally sell even abroad. What they bought in Ethiopia is unknown and will again have to be discounted from the point of view of Meccan trade. But such information as we have leaves no doubt

that their imports were the necessities and petty luxuries that the inhabitants of Arabia have always had to procure from the fringes of the Fertile Crescent and elsewhere, not the luxury goods with which Lammens would have them equip themselves abroad".[1]

After Crone had mentioned what agreed with her from the Islamic sources, she discussed Makkan trade issues and she concluded her study rejecting the existence of Quraysh world transportation trade while she was about to admit it, as will be explained below, she jumped to her real purpose to be against what has come in the Ilaf Surah. Therefore, she extracted from the sources what agreed with her opinion, leaving behind all other sources, which had been already investigated by both eastern and western researchers to confirm the Quraysh world trade. She claimed that early information should be preferred to the latter to inspire the reader that she observes the principles of historical research. We will disprove what Crone has adopted with regard to Quraysh trade withSyria, Hira, Yemen and Ethiopia, respectively.

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[1] Crone, op. cit., pp. 149-151.

Trade with Syria

First, Crone depends in her discussion of this matter on that: *The route between Mecca and Syria, traditionally identified as the northern end of the incense route, is assumed by modern scholars to have been controlled by the Ghassanids, who must have been ousted by Quraysh. Thus Simon has it that the fifth clause of the peace treaty between Byzantium and Persia in 561 furnishes decisive proof that the Ghassanids "actively pursued their commerce and without doubt controlled the Syrian part of incense route".*[1]

Crone depended on not mentioning Arabs unequivocally in the treaty she eluded, as a proof that there was no north-south trade with Syria in the second half of sixth century A.D.

In fact, the fifth clause in the previous treaty was devoted to organizing east-west trade between Lakhmids and Ghassanids – the agents of Persian and Byzantine - and their neighbors, and that there was no direct relation with the north-south trade. However, if we carefully look into this, it is possible to follow the threads which link the events together, as follows:

- This clause paved the way to understand some aspects of the international situations that facilitated the transfer of the eastern trade to the Makkan caravan way. According to this clause, Arab traders had to pay customs twice for their goods: first to the Persian; then to the Byzantine. Nevertheless, if the trade had been transferred

[1] Crone, op. cit., p. 138

to the Arab side, the customs would be paid only once to the Byzantines, and the Persian treasury would be deprived from such customs.

- If the treaty proves that the Ghassanids used to follow their commercial activities in the Syrian side of incense route, how then the incense or rather how did eastern and western goods reach the Ghassanids, while there was no transportation between northeast and northwest of the Arabian Peninsula because of the conflict between the Persians and the Romans? The logical answer to this is that the goods had reached them by land and sea via the south of Arabia. If it is so, as this is in fact the case, then who carried these goods by land other than Quraysh and their tremendous caravans.

- The treaty has clearly mentioned the Arabs. This is an evidence of their participation in the world eastern trade, and proves their major role in it. This led the two great powers to be in agreement to bind their agents (i.e., of Al-Manadira and Ghassanids), as they were incapable of handling the necessary affairs of the trade routes to facilitate the commercial caravans from the east and west of Arabia. Particularly, after the wars between Al-Manadira and Ghassanids in the second half of the sixth century, it was a struggle over power, regardless of needs and interests of the two great powers. This was an excellent opportunity for the Quraysh caravans and their mobility.

Second, the researcher tries to negate and reject what historical sources agreed unanimously on, about the life of the Messenger (peace be upon him), his departure to the

Levant for the first time, when he was a boy in the company of his uncle Abu Talib, and the second time for Khadija's trade (May Allah be pleased with her). Crone depended on some Syrian historical sources. She says that on this particular question these sources offer nothing that the Messenger "was a trader among the traders, or that the Qurashis were traders too, or even that Muhammad was one of them."[1] In other words, she made all the Islamic sources invalid, which are regarded as primary sources and not secondary sources as she claims. All these sources make mention of this matter and unanimously confirm it. It is sufficient for the reader to refer to any one of the Islamic sources on the life of the Messenger (pbuh) to make sure of this fact. The reader can find out the reality is not what Crone rejected depending on two suspect Byzantine references that she cited; they made no mention of the beginning of the young life of the Messenger (pbuh).

Third, the accounts about Surah Al-Quraysh unanimously agreed that Hashim is the one who established the cornerstone of Quraysh world trade. This event was logical, as Byzantium was in need of other alternative trading routes, which had to go from the Gulf to Syria across the territories and regions under the power of the Persian state that was in conflict with Byzantium at that time. Then, the three brothers of Hashim had made Ilafs (i.e., treaties) with Hira, Ethiopia and Yemen; each one of them in the market where he had experience at.

1 Crone, op. cit., p. 114.

The trade in these territories was not directly subject to the state of war and peace owing to the Quraysh's neutral policy. However, it is not expected or acceptable that the Quraysh had minutely planned for this at once, or sent their envoys for such duties. It is rather Hashim who thought about this idea and he succeeded in it. When the Quraysh saw the success of this idea in practice, they expanded their trade and they sent each of Hashim's brothers to the place at which he used to practice his trade to make treaties. This means that the treaties were not made at once, but gradually to include the three markets.

Fourth, the Ilaf (i.e., treaty) means insurance without any alliance, as mentioned earlier: that is, the permission of the Quraysh trade to pass through the tribes' territories in return for them to carry the tribes' goods to the markets of the Levant, and return their capital with profits while coming back. This was in exchange for the tribes to secure and escort the Quraysh caravans in their territories. Thus, the reciprocal advantage had become the best insurance for such treaties. The Holy Qur'an mentions such treaties in verses with the word 'Ilaf', which does not mean an alliance between contracting parties, but permission for trade. This explains the Quraysh's treaties with two conflicting parties, i.e., the Persians and the Byzantines. This was the case with Palmyra when it commercially dealt with transporting eastern and Arabian trade between the Persians and Romans who were in ongoing conflict

until the middle of the third century when Palmyra finally decided to be at the side of the Romans.[1]

Fifth, Crone was about to confess the Makkah world trade, then she went back to mention that: *"Mecca trade stopped at some time before the rise of Islam."*[2]

The question is what trade had stopped. Does she refer to the cease of trading route between Persia and the Levant, and the unfavourable situation in the marine route in the Red Sea, and the Battle of Badr that suspended the Meccan caravans? If she wanted to say so, why did not she declare it? Does she fear this declaration would lead her to the logical inference, that the Battle of Badr had ceased Meccan trade with the Levant? This means that the Quraysh was having a trade with the Levant. If the Quraysh did not carry their trade and the eastern trade to the Levant, then who transported such trade during the conflict between the Persians and the Byzantines?

The Ilaf founded by Hashim became lawful and highly appreciated by the Arabs; the Poet Matrud Ibn Ka'ab Al-Khuza'i mentioned such Ilaf in his poetry.[3]

Sixth, Crone had mentioned sixteen persons of Quraysh who were practicing trade in the Levant and she identified the names of the places in which they resided

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[1] To read more on the role of Palmyra in the eastern trade between Persia and Rome, see Al-Roubi, 'Amal Mohammed, ***Egypt in the Roman Era***, pp. 141-147

[2] Crone, op. cit., p. 113.

[3] Al-Baladhiri, Ahmad bin Yahia bin Ja'far bin Dawood (d.302 H/892 A.D), ***Ansaab Al-Ashraaf***, Part 1. p. 60, Cairo, 1959.

and did their trade. She unreservedly admitted that individual Qurashis were in Syria more than elsewhere.[1]

This confirms the importance of this market for Qurashi traders. Again, she doubted Quraysh trade with Syria; and used the term "diaspora= diaσлора=scattering, dispersion"[2] to refer to the places where Qurashis resided in the Levant. The use of this term to Qurashis is not applicable as it can be applied to those who do not have native land like the Jews when they were scattered throughout the globe, or the Gypsies. The fact is that Quraysh tribe was not as such in Syria or Yemen, as the author suggests. The use of the term "diaspora" to describe the tribe of the last Prophet (PBUH) is not appropriate and discloses her personal feelings toward the Quraysh tribe.

Seventh, Crone denied what Al-Kalbi mentioned in his assumption that the Byzantine Emperor resided in Syria.[3] Nothing could prevent the Emperor from staying in Syria for a while, because it was part of the Byzantine Empire, similar to other emperors mentioned in Byzantine references. Yet, when referring to the text that she depended on the footnote.[4] Ibn Hisham did not mention

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[1] Crone, op. cit., p. 115.

[2] Crone, op. cit., p. 117, The term is taken from the Greek Language, see: Liddell & Scott, ***A Greek English Lexicon***, Oxford, 1973, p. 412.

[3] Crone, op. cit., p. 112.

[4] Crone, op. cit., p. 207, No. 26. Ibn Habib mentioned the text as follows: " Ibn Habib mentions about the meeting of Hashim (Amr) Ibn Abd Manaf with the Roman Caesar, saying to him "I have people who are Arab traders. If you can write a guarantee of protection for them and their trade, then they will come to you with Hijaz foodstuff and clothes to sell here; they will be cheaper for you." He wrote a gurantee of protection for them. Hashim took the letter

that the emperor was residing in Syria but he said that Hisham met the emperor in Syria. This means that what she rejected was a misinterpretation of the original text. She was supposed to make it clear to the reader that it was her assumption or preference.

Eighth, with regard to gold and silver trade with Syria, Crone said: "The sources are agreed that after their defeat at Badr, the Makkans tried to avoid interception at the hands of Muhammad by travelling to Syria via the Iraq route, under the guidance of a tribesman native to central or eastern Arabia. The attempt was a failure: Muhammad's men intercepted the caravan at Qarada, a watering place in

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of protection, then while passing the Arab districts along the Levant route thereby obtaining ilaf-agreements from their gentlefolk. Ilaf-tradition means insurance without any alliance, but it is an assurance for people and that Quraysh carry their goods and return their capital and profits.

Hashim took ilaf – agreements on the way from the Levant until he reached Mecca. Then Meccan traders went out with a great trade and Hashim permitted them to make use of these ilaf which he took from the Arabs. He continued to meet them with the gentlefolks of the Arabs until they reached the Levant. Then he died on this journey to the Levant in Gaza. When Hashim died, Al-Muttalib Ibn Abd Manaf did the same. Al-Muttalib was the oldest son of Abd Manaf and he died in Radman in Yemen. Then Abd Shams Ibn Abd Manaf went to the Negus and took a letter of protection for those who traded before him of Quraysh until he reached Mecca where he died and was buried in Al-Hujun. He was older than Hashim, then Nawfal Ibn Abd Manaf who was the youngest son of Abd Manaf from another mother went to Iraq and obtained a letter of protection for the Quraysh traders from Kisra. He thereby secured Ilaf-agreement from the Arabs until he reached Mecca. He then went back to Iraq again and died in Salaman. The sons of Abd Manaf promoted Quraysh. Arabs did not see like them. They were more generous, patient, wiser and more handsome. ***Al-Munammaq***, pp. 31-36; ***Al-Muhabbar***, pp. 162-163.

Najd. The interest of this episode lies in the fact that the caravan in question is said to have carried large quantities of silver, generally said to have been in the care of Safwan Ibn Umayya, though Ibn Ishaq's account implies that it was being looked after by Abu Sufyan. In connection with this raid, Ibn Ishaq goes so far as to claim that silver was what the Makkans mostly traded in. Sprenger accepted this claim, though he found it problematic."[1]

Lammens also accepted it, without noticing any problems, but since then the Qurashi silver trade seems to have been forgotten by the secondary literature. It probably should be forgotten. But given that silver is one of the few precious commodities for which there is some evidence in the sources, it is worth examining why."[2]

"There is no doubt that Arabia was silver-bearing in the past. In the period of interest to us, silver was mined in Najd and Yemen, and as mentioned already, the mines were under Persian control. Shamam, the mine in Najd that also yielded copper, was colonized by a thousand or several thousand Zoroastrians, and boasted two fire-temples, while Radrad, the Yemeni mine in the territory of Hamdan, was run by the so-called "Persians of the Mine" who had started coming in the Jahiliyya and who were still there in the ninth century, when the mine fell into ruin. One account of the caravan which the Persian governor of Yemen dispatched to the Persian emperor duly states that it was loaded with the silver ingots. This was hardly the only occasion on which silver travelled to Iraq by land, for

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[1] Crone, op. cit., pp. 87-88.
[2] Crone, op. cit., pp. 87-88.

Radrad was still provisioned by caravan from Iraq in Islamic times, and the caravans presumably carried something back."[1]

Crone comments on what she presented earlier saying that: "None of this, however, does much to explain what role the Meccans may have played in the silver trade. They had no access to silver of their own. There is, at least, no mention of silver mines in the vicinity of Mecca, and they had, in any case, no wood with which to melt it. The absence of silver from the trading agreement between Hashim and the Byzantine emperor, from the tribute envisaged by the would-be king of Mecca for Byzantium, and from the gifts with which the Meccans hoped to coax the Negus into extraditing the Muslim refugees in Ethiopia certainly do not suggest that this was a commodity that they were in a position to export."[2]

In this regard, the researcher ignored who was producing and trading silver before the Persians. Even without mentioning more details about silver, which would seem out of context while talking about the Qarada raid, it would be possible for the people of Mecca to purchase silver from the Persians or carry it in caravans for the sake of the Persians whose silver was described by Al-Hamadani as: "The silver metal of Radrad is unprecedented"[3]

It was known that the Quraysh always observed a policy of neutrality in its relation with both Persia and

[1] Crone, op. cit., p. 88.
[2] Crone, op. cit., pp. 88-89.
[3] Al-Hamadani, ***Sifat Jazirat-il-Arab***, p. 364.

Byzantium at that period, in order to protect its commercial interests. In addition, the Quraysh was able to import silver from other places in the Arabian Peninsula and to carry it in their trading caravans, especially from Yemen, which was famous for silver, and from the east of Africa. Yet, Crone's confirmation that Quraysh was unable to export silver, as it had no wood to melt it, is a weak assumption. If Mecca had no wood suitable for making ships, it had wood to melt iron and silver, otherwise, how they were able to make their war tools and other daily life tools from iron and copper?

At the same time, what is strange if the people of Mecca exported silver at some time or imported it at another time? It was possible for them to export it as raw material and import it as manufactured goods or commodities, which is one of the basic principles of economics for centuries. The availability of silver in the Quraysh caravans was confirmed clearly by one of the Islamic sources which Crone mentioned in her footnote: "a mawla of the Quraysh go to Syria or Ethiopia on trade carrying a silver cup (jam), sometimes said to have been inlaid with gold."[1]

Ninth, Crone did not only deny that the Qurashi caravans carried silver to Syria but she also did the same concerning gold. She said: *"In Waqidi's account of the raid at Qarada, the Qurashi caravan is loaded not only with silver but also with gold, and a story going back to Kalbi has it that 'Umar once tried to smuggle gold into Syria. One version of this story implies that Qurashi*

[1] Crone, op. cit., p. 89.

traders in Syria habitually carried gold with them. Did the Makkans then owe their wealth to the export of gold to the Byzantine Empire? Once again the answer is negative."[1]

Crone justifies her assumptions by saying that: "The sources thus do not suggest that Quraysh were involved in the mining of gold. They do not assert that Quraysh would obtain gold from their neighbours, and that some of this gold would find its way to the north. But the reason why some of this gold would find its way to the north is clearly that it was a substitute for currency, not that it was an export commodity."[2]

The following can be noted on what was mentioned above:

Crone admitted the existence of gold in the north of Arabia, but strongly denied its availability in Mecca. However, she mentioned three gold mines located in Mecca or its vicinity. She held the view that Mecca got gold from its neighbors, and this gold went to the north in exchange for the currency and not as an export. She skipped over what the Makkans did with their gold mines. However, she mentioned that Al-Hajjaj Ibn Ilat Al-Sullami used to own one of these mines. He was known for his great wealth, and he used to loan the Makkans large amounts of money. It took him days to collect such wealth before the Makkans knew about his Islam. She also mentioned what was known as mountainous mines in Juhaina, the income of which the Prophet Muhammad granted to Bilal Ibn Al-Harith Al-Muzni.

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[1] Crone, op.cit., p. 93

[2] Crone, op.cit., p. 94

Crone added that: "Those who have information about Makkan say that at Al-'Ayr and Al-Ayrah, two mountains overlooking Makka, there are mines (of gold)…but there does not appear to have been any mountains with these names in Mecca."[1]

With reference to Crone's sources, i.e., Yaqut Al-Hamawi and Al-Bakri, we confirm the existence of the two mountains as opposed to her claim. It is as follows: Yaqut says that Al-'Ayr is a mountain in Hijaz. Arram said, "Ayr are two reddish colour mountains on your right when you are in the middle of Al-'Aqiq toward Mecca, and Shouran mountain is on your left overlooking the dam."[2]

Thus, Crone misinterprets and denies the existence of the two mountains, which Al-Hamadani mentioned had gold, in order to support her view and reject the existence of gold in Al-Hijaz. How then the Qurayshs carried it in their trading caravans.

In addition to what has been said above, Crone is familiar with other texts about this issue which she neglected. For example, the declaration of Zinba, the Byzantine customs officer, who said: "A caravan of Quraysh coming to Syria for trade without gold – impossible!"[3]

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[1] Yaqut Al-Hamawi, Part 3, p. 307.

[2] Crone, op. cit., p. 93; Yaqut, Part 4, p. 172, Madat A'yr Al-Ayra, Beirut Edition; Al-Bakri, Abu Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz (d. 487 H/1904 A.D., ***Mu'jam Ma'stuijim, Madat Thawr***, Vol. 1. p. 315, Beirut Edition 1998; Madat A'yr, Vol. 2, p. 239.

[3] Crone, op. cit., p. 93.

Such exclamation about the absence of gold in the caravan of Quraysh proves that the caravans of Quraysh used to carry gold as raw material to Byzantium for which they are charged customs. This does not negate that traders used to carry gold coins with them for trading, without that or the equivalent; they could not do any trade.

This proves the presence of gold mines in Mecca; therefore, Arabs yielded the precious metal from it. It is likely that slaves were working in these mines because such work is difficult and dangerous, similar to the slaves of Greek, who were working in the well-known mines of Laureum in Athens, and the Roman slaves, too, who have been working in different mines until now. The probability is that such gold used to be carried by the Qurashi traders in their caravans to Syria to sell it. This is what made Zinba, the Byzantine customs officer, queried about when it was not there in the Quraysh caravan. What supports what we have presented is what Al-Waqidi mentioned about the Ghassanids who used to get gold from the traders.

Some of these traders preferred to hide their gold instead of giving them to camels to swallow. What supports the presence of gold in Mecca is that Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq (May Allah be pleased with him) bought Bilal (May Allah be pleased with him) for a pound of gold. It became known that Al-Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) took 20 ounces of gold when he went to Badr to buy food for his people. In addition, Al-Abbas ransomed himself for 70 ounces and his nephew for 70 when they were captured by Muslims in the Great Battle of Badr. Sources did not mention whether their ransom was paid in

silver or gold. Consequently, it can be said that gold was one of the sources of Quraysh's wealth.

Tenth, it has become clear that the Quraysh trade with the Levant had its own value; therefore, Qurashis were keen to secure their trading route to the Levant after the migration of Muslims to Madina. What supports this is that when the Quraysh assault Abu Dhar Al-Ghifari after he declared his Islam, Al-Abbas shouted at them saying:

"Woe to you! Do not you know that he belongs to Ghafar through which is your trade route to the Levant."[1]

Eleventh, since the migration to Madinah until the Battle of Badr, the policy of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was oriented to intercept Quraysh caravans going to the Levant due to their importance to Quraysh's economics, and to compensate for the immigrants' properties, which they were forced to leave in Mecca before their migration. Ibn Hisham clearly supports the importance of this trade in his Book, ***The Biography of the Prophet Muhammad***, when he talked about the Battle of Tabuk in the 9th year of Hijrah. He said:

"When the Messenger (PBUH) reached Tabuk, Yuhanna Ibn Ru'bah of A'ylah came to him to make peace with the Messenger and paid him the tribute. Also, the people of Jaraba' and the people of A'dhruh paid the tributes. The Messenger (PBUH) wrote a letter to both of

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[1] On the assault of Quraysh on Abu Dhar Al-Ghifari, see: Al-Bukhari, Abu Abdullah Mohammed Ismail (d. 256 H), ***Saheeh Al-Bukhari***, Beirut, 1424 H/2004, p. 673.

them. These letters of protection are documented. The text of the letter to Yuhanna Ibn Ru'bah is:

"In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful:

This is a guarantee of protection from Allah and Muhammad the Prophet, the Messenger of Allah, to Yuhanna and the people of A'ylah. Their ships, their caravans on land and sea shall have the custody of Allah and the Prophet Muhammad, he and whosoever are with him of the people of the Levant and those of the sea. Whosoever violates this treaty, his wealth shall not save him; it shall be the fair prize of him that takes it. Now it should not be lawful to prevent men from any water which they have been in the habit of frequenting, nor from any journey they desire to make, whether by sea or by land."[1]

This letter of the Prophet to the people of A'ylah clearly mentions the main parties of the Ilaf: the people of the Levant, the people of Yemen, and the people of the Sea, and both ships and caravans. This treaty was with the Head of A'ylah, located on top of the Red Sea, where the Quraysh land caravans and the Arab sea trade from the south of the Arabian Peninsula up to where they used to go in the Red Sea. Crone referred to two sources: Al-Hamadani and Jawharat Al-Ayan, p. 137.

[1] See Ibn Hisham, ***As-Seerah***, Vol. 2, pp. 525-526.

Trade with Al-Hira

Crone adopted the same approach concerning Al-Hira trading center saying that: *"Ibn al-kalbi's ilaf-tradition asserts that the Meccans traded regularly there, and there is some concrete evidence in support of this claim. Thus one story has Abu Sufyan accompany a caravan of Qurashis and Thaqafis to Iraq, while another displays him as a trader at Hira. It was also Abu Sufyan and/or Safwan Ibn Umayya who accompanied the caravan intercepted by the Muslims at Qarada. Hakam Ibn Abi'l-As once went to Hira for the sale of perfume. And Musafir Ibn Abi 'Amr went there to earn money for dower, engaging in trade, according to some, though others have it that he chose the easier method of asking Nu'man Ibn al-Mundhir for help. And according to Ibn al-Kalbi himself, it was Qurashis trading with Hira that brought zandaqa to Mecca.*

It is noticeable that all the individuals mentioned above were Umayyads, and the only destination seems to have been Hira. The ilaf-tradition adds no place names, dispatching Nawfal, the founder of the Iraqi trade, at Salman on the route to Iraq in Arabia itself. Some sources, however, add details on the relations that obtained between Quraysh and the tribes along the route in question.

The trouble with these accounts is that they are so contradictory as to cancel one another out. Thus Ibn al-Kalbi claims that Nawfal obtained permission from the Persian emperor (or the king of Hira) for Quraysh to trade in Iraq; but the story that has Abu Sufyan

accompany a caravan of Thaqafis and Quraysh to Iraq makes Abu Sufyan exclaim that this is a dangerous undertaking because the Persian has not given them permission to trade in his land, which is no matjar to them. Similarly, Ibn al-Kalbi claims that Nawfal concluded ilaf-agreements with the tribes on the way to Iraq, thereby obtaining safe passage for Quraysh; but other sources (themselves dependent on Ibn al-Kalbi) have it that Quraysh enjoyed automatic inviolability among most of the tribes along the Iraqi route, either because Mudar and their allies respected their direct and indirect ties of kinship with Quraysh or because they regarded Quraysh as holy men. And both claims are contradicted in their turn by the story of Hakam b. Abi'l-As, for Hakam sought jiwar from one of these allies of Mudar on his way to Iraq, or, in other words, he made ad hoc arrangements for his safety on the way in equal ignorance of Qurashi ilafs and their inviolability among the tribes in question.

Further, we are told that when Quraysh took the route through the territory of Rabi'a, they would be escorted by the sons of 'Amr b. Marthad, the chief of Qays b. Tha'laba, from Bakr b. Wa'il, thereby obtaining safe passage. This is perhaps compatible with the existence of ilaf-agreements (though hardly with inviolability). But Abu Sufyan and Safwan b. Umayya seem to have been ignorant of this agreement, given that they were at a loss at what to do when Muhammad forced them to take their caravan to Syria via the route to Iraq; and when a solution to their problem was proposed in the form of a guide from Bakr b. Wa'il, who presumably served as their guarantor of safety as well, the guide in question was not

a son of 'Amr b. Marthad, but an unknown man by the name of Furat b. Hayyan.

The tradition thus asserts both that the Meccans had regular commercial relations with Hira and that they did not. Presumably then they did not. For one thing, the tradition is more likely to have credited the Meccans with a fictitious matjar than to have denied them an historical one. For another, the assumption that they did not have regular commercial relations with this area seems to be the prevailing one.

The Qarada story presupposes that Quraysh did not trade in Iraq; Abu Sufyan explicitly says as much as leader of the Qurashi-Thaqafi caravan; and Hakam b. Abi'l-As jiwar implies the same. Apart from Ibn al-Kalbi, no exegetes mention Iraq or Persia in explanation of the two (or two sets of) journeys mentioned in the Qur'an. The descriptions of Qurashi relations with Mudar and Rabi'a along the Iraq route are given in connection with their visits to Dumat al-Jandal (modern Jawf), and it is neither said nor implied that they used to continue to Hira.

The stories that depict Abu Sufyan and Musafir as traders in Hira have variants in which the trade is omitted, and the same is true of Ibn al-Kalbi's account of the spread of zandaqa in Mecca, a phenomenon of dubious historicity in itself. Naturally, there is no reason to assert that Qurashi traders never ventured across to Hira; but their visits must have been rare enough that it is

meaningless to speak of a Qurashi trade with Iraq, a point that has in fact been made before."[1]

There is a clear contradiction in what Crone mentioned above. She presented the sources that confirm the relation between Quraysh and Al-Hira and supported her view with evidence. However, she concluded by completely denying the existence of such trade. This is clearly stated in the end of the above-mentioned quotation. We put down the following:

First, Crone denied the various illustrations in the Islamic narrations about the Quraysh's relation and its trade with Al-Hira in the pre-Islam period. She accepted the only narration by Al-Asfahani concerning Abu Sufyan and Sufyan Ibn Ummaya. Both narrations do not deny the existence of Quraysh's trade with Persia and Al-Hira, but perhaps they indicated new developments that emerged in the horizons. At the top of these developments is the invasion of Yemen by Ethiopia, and the desire of Persia to prevent Ethiopia from trading in Yemen. Therefore, it is likely that Persia tried to close, at some time, its trading market to Yemen and Ethiopia, which was carried by the Quraysh caravans. Even if this presumption was true; it did not seem to last for a long period of time, as the Meccan traders used to visit it frequently. Concerning the incidents of Abu Sufyan and Al-Hakam Ibn Abi Al-A'ss, it had happened after the rise of Islam, just a short while

[1] Crone, op. cit., pp. 129-132; Al-Ya'qubi, Ahmad Ibn Abi Ya'qub (d. 284 H/897 AD), ***Ta'reekh***, Part 2, Beirut, 1400 H/1980, p. 46. It is mentioned that the Rabi'a Tribe fought Kisra and defeated them in Dhi Qar. This was four or five months after the Battle of Badr. See Al-Waqidi, Al-Maghaazi, p. 27.

before the Dhi Qar Battle in which the Persian and the Arab forces fought a few months after the victory of the Muslims in the great Battle of Badr. This shows that the relation between the two sides was tense in that period. As a result, Abu Sufyan and Al-Hakam Ibn Abi Al-A'ss had to secure their trade route to their trading market, due to the new developments that took place there, namely, the relation with the Persians and the situation of being chased by Muslims and suffered economically since the migration of Muslims to Madinah.

Second, the Kings of Sasan used to send their caravans, escorted by their agents, to the south of the Arabian Peninsula carrying the products of those territories to Iraq and the Persian commercial centers. Among them were the products of Ethiopia in particular, as Persia and Al-Hira were in direct commercial relation with the eastern trade coming from the Indian Ocean and the gulf region, and perhaps from Hadhramout and Yemen since the Persian occupation to the latter in the year of 570.[1]

The trade of Ethiopia to Persia and Al-Hira included ostrich feathers, ivory and slaves. We can understand that Ethiopian products were not directly carried to Persia during the period of Abraha who showed enmity toward Persia due to the hostility of Byzantium to Persia. This is also during the period of Dhi Yazan and his successors who antagonized Ethiopia. It seems that Ethiopian products used to reach Al-Shua'ybah port. Then according to the Ilaf-agreement, Meccan caravans carried some of these products to satisfy the needs of Al-Hira and Persia.

[1] Crone, op. cit., pp. 48-49.

Meccan traders used to come to Al-Madaen and contact Kisra's palace and practice there the activity of buying and selling. Wealthy Christians of Al-Hira became partners with Quraysh merchants in their trade, like Ka'ab Ibn Udday Al-Tannukhi who had a partnership with Ummar Ibn Al-Khattab (May Allah be pleased with him) in silk fabric trading in the pre-Islamic era[1].

Third, Al-Asfahani reported much about the relation between some Makkans and Al-Hira. He mentioned, for instance, that Musafir Ibn Amr Ibn Ummayya had some poetry, and he was fond of Hind bint Utbah whom he praised in his poetry. He proposed to her after she had departed Al-Fakiha Ibn Al-Mughira, but she refused him in spite of his wealth. He went to Al-Nu'man to help him in this matter, and then came back. According to another version of this story, he went to Al-Hira to see Amr Ibn Hind and had some words with him. Abu Sufyan Ibn Harb used to come to Al-Hira, too.[2] We know a lot about the many visits of Al-Nabigha Al-Dhibyani to Al-Nu'man and the people of Jabalah of Ghassanids. Then, Al-Naabigha Al-Dhibyani apologized to Al-Nu'man in poetry.

We also know about Amr Ibn Kalthoum and his visits to Al-Hira and his story with Amr Ibn Hind. The relation between Quraysh and Al-Hira had been recorded by virtue of poetry in which there was no mention of political or commercial situations, as poetry did not care

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[1] Sihab, Ibid., pp. 218-219.

[2] Al-Asfahani, Abu Al-Faraj Ali IbnAhmad IbnMohammad Ibn Ahmad Al-Qurashi (d. 356 H/967 AD), Al-A'ghaani, Part 9, Cairo, 1963, pp. 50 and 55.

about them, but it showed the relation between Quraysh and Al-Hira. Such relation would not have flourished, if the commercial relation had not prospered between Quraysh and Al-Hira, due to Quraysh trade, their caravans, their journeys by winter and summer and the effect of such seasons.

Fourth, some Arabic sources tell us that a person of Abd Al-Daar people used to trade openly with Persia, used to bring with him some Persian tales, and he used to retell these tales to Quraysh on his return to Mecca. He claimed that if Muhammad was able to tell about the people of A'ad and Thamoud, he could tell them tales about Rustum, Osffendiar and the emprors of Persia. Yet, Crone found it so difficult to claim that there was trade between Quraysh and Persia based on what was mentioned above.[1] She mentioned that Musafir met Abu Sufyan in Al-Hira, but she did not take it into consideration, because it was mentioned only once that he went to Al-Hira for trade, whereas, she accepted only one narration about Abu Sufyan and Al-Hakam, as mentioned above. This shows that she is determined to reject any evidence.[2]

Fifth,Quraysh trade flourished greatly, while the position of Lakhmid Kings collapsed in Kisra palace, because the Arab tribes started attacking Persian caravans. On the other hand, the caravans of Al-Hira Kings were not sent as they used to in the previous years. Makkans benefited from this, and took hold of the market for their

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[1] Crone, op. cit., pp. 130-132.

[2] See footnotes 87 and 99 above; on the Day of Dhi Qar. See also Abdul Hamid, Sa'ad Zaghlool, ***Ta'rikh Al-Arab Gabl Al-Islam***, Beirut, 1976, p. 23.

own, especially after the death of Al-Nu'man Ibn Al-Mundhir and the victory of the Arabs over the Persians in Dhi Qaar Day.

The position of Quraysh in the Ilaf was distinguished by its commercial activities in all regions. When a commercial opportunity arose in the eastern trade, Quraysh hurried to seize it. Although there was trade between the Quraysh and Iraq, as the above-mentioned sources confirmed, it was not as big as the trade between Quraysh and Syria. The logical reason for this is that Persia was in direct contact with Indian goods and the goods southwest of the Arabian Peninsula via the Arabian Gulf. They were mainly in need of Ethiopian goods that were carried to them by the Qurayshi caravans.

Although Crone frankly admits that the visits of Quraysh to Iraq were not occasional, she immediately returns to deny what she had already said, claiming that they did not go across Al-Hira, so it is pointless to talk about Quraysh trade with Iraq. If we presume that the Quraysh did not go across Al-Hira, the question is where they used to go after reaching there. The logical answer is that they used to go across Al-Hira to Iraq. Quraysh traders whom we met there confirmed this fact. Furthermore, this fact was also confirmed by the Ethiopian and the Arabian goods which the Persian market was in need of.

Trade with Yemen

Crone says: *"Yemen is generally described as the second most important matjar, place of trade, of the Meccans. Thus, the two journeys mentioned in Surat Quraysh are commonly identified as journeys to Syria and the Yemen, though Yemen is sometimes omitted in favour of two journeys to Syria or one to Egypt or to Ethiopia. Individual Qurashis mentioned as having trading relations with Yemen include Hashimites such as 'Abd al-Muttalib (whose journeys are not, however, explicitly identified as trading journeys) Abbas b. Abd al-Muttalib and Ibn Abbas, but above all Makhzumis: Abu Rabi'a b. al-Mughira, Walid b. al-Mughira, Fakih b. al-Mughira, Hisham b. al-Mughira and his sons, as well as Abdallah b. Abi'l-Rabi'a and 'Umara b. al-Walid. Makhzumis are also associated with Yemen, as well as Ethiopia, in other ways. Dala'il al-nubuwwa stories in which Abu Sufyan visits Yemen can presumably be rejected, but other Qurashis are occasionally seen on trading journeys in Yemen, too. Explicit mention of caravans travelling between Meccan and Yemen for purposes of trade is nonetheless rare.*

There is also little explicit information on where the traders went. Ibn al-Kalbi's ilaf-tradition merely has Muttalib (who does in Yemen what Hashim does in Syria) die on his way to Yemen in the nondescript place of Radman and contrary to what one might expect, they are not attested at Aden, the major Yemeni emporium and the ultimate source of Yemeni perfume at the time. Sana'a is usually mentioned in political rather than commercial contexts. A man from Sana'a is on record as having owed money to 'Abd al-Muttalib, and one version of the story of

the desecration of Abraha's church places Qurashi merchants in this city. But one of the rival versions places the events in Najran, and here we are on firmer ground. Thus, it was Najran that Hisham b. al-Mughira settled, and to Najran that Hubayra b. Abi Wahb fled after the conquest of Mecca, just as it was to the bishop of Najran that Walid b. al-Mughira owed money, according to some. All three men were Makhzumis. 'Abd al-Muttalib is supposed to have been a friend of the bishop of Najran, and he also had a Jewish protégé (jar) from Najran who used to trade in the markets of Tihama. It is Najran that is mentioned in the one passage suggestive of where the Meccans obtained their Yemeni perfume, and they could certainly have bought their Yemeni clothing there, too. It was to the tribe of Murad in the Najran area that were reputed to have sold donkeys. They were also reputed to have sold them to Daws of the Sarat, and it seems to have been from Daws and other tribes of the Sarat that they obtained their Ethiopian slaves. Abu Sufyan had an important Azdi ally (balif) from the Sarat, and Qurashi traders were apparently numerous there. Qurashi traders also visited the annual fair at Hubasha, six days journey to the South of Mecca in the territory of Bariq, an Azdi tribe. Some of them bought clothes there. Trading in "Yemen" would thus seem to have meant trading in the area between Mecca and Najran, on the fringes of the land occupied by Ethiopians and Persians, rather than in Yemen itself."[1]

[1] Crone, op. cit., pp. 120-124; Abdullah IbnAbi Rabi'a specialized in Yemeni trade. He used to send perfume to a woman to sell it in Medinah during the Caliphate of Umar Ibn Al-Khattab (May Allah be pleased with him).

We note the following on Crone's discussions of this issue:

First,the Noble Qur'an and all written Islamic sources confirm the incident of Abraha's attempt to conquer Makka. Quraysh trade with Yemen was emphasized in one of the Islamic sources, which Crone completely ignored. This trade was officially permitted by its Ethiopian ruler. It is mentioned in one of these sources and when Abraha knew about the desecration of Al-Kulais, he said, "this is an act by Quraysh due to their anger for their House which is the destination of Arab pilgrims…there were traders of Quraysh in Sana'a. Among them was Hisham Ibn Al-Mughira. Abraha who convened these traders and said to them: "Did I not permit you to trade in my land, and give orders to protect and respect you?"[1]

As mentioned above, Crone contented herself with a quick reference to this text without giving any further details to the reader. She also did not cite the text which stated that Abraha had already made an Ilaf-agreement for them by which they were permitted to trade in Yemen. He permitted them to do what his predecessor allowed them to do. Even if we presume that Najran was the place where Abraha talked to the Qurashis, the church which was desecrated by Quraysh, was in Sana'a and not in Najran.

She used to sell it by cash or credit; if by credit she used to record it (Al-Asfahani, Al-A'ghaani, Part 1. p. 64). Other women used to sell perfume. Abu Talib traded in the same. Most probably, this perfume was Yemeni too. See, ***Manufacturing the Arabian Perfumes,***that had reputation in the ancient world. Patricia Crone, ***Meccan Trade and the rise of Islam***, translated and studied by A'maal Al-Roubi, Cairo, 2005. See also the footnote below pp. 170-171.

[1] Sihab, ibid., p. 215.

Furthermore, the permission given by Abraha to Quraysh to trade was not only exclusive to Najran but also included all Yemen.

Second, it is obvious, (from the list of the names repeatedly mentioned in the Islamic sources like: Abd Al-Muttalib, Al-Abbas Ibn Abd Al-Muttalib and Ibn Al-Abbas, Abu Rabi'a Ibn Al-Mughira, Alwaleed Ibn Al-Mughira, Fakih Ibn Al-Mughira, Hisham Ibn Al-Mughira and his sons, Abdallah Ibn Abi'l-Rabi'a, 'Imarah IbnAl-walid and Abi Sufyan), that the Quraysh's caravans and their trade were not confined to Quraysh alone, because this trade was not for monopoly. It was a trade of the bigger partner who shared with others from which all could benefit. Therefore, it was possible for Quraysh to purchase the commodities from those who brought them in addition to what Quraysh themselves used to bring from other commercial centers, which they used to visit.

Third, there is no doubt that the defeat of Abraha, in the year 570 A.D. in Mecca, was a beginning of a new era. This made Mecca reach its climax in its influence in Yemen and among all Arabs after the failure of the greatest attempts to subjugate Mecca and the most dangerous plan to usurp its trade and religious, political and economic leadership. However, Muslim authors, as it is known, had no direct concern about the economic aspects and their details, as far as they had no direct connection with religious and political events, which they were their top priority. This was mentioned by Crone, but without any explanation.

Fourth, the other side concerning the trade of Quraysh in Yemen, Crone anticipated the death of Al-Muttalib in Aden, which is located in the southern part of Yemen, and not in Radman. This is very strange, as she supported her claim with odd assumptions. Notwithstanding, Ibn Habib mentioned Al-Muttalib died in this place on his way to Yemen and did not mention that he was residing in Radman and died there.

Fifth, Crone did not explain that Hisham Ibn Al-Mughira was among the Makkan traders in Sana'a. We notice that this fact is not stated in her footnote. She did the same with Al-Walid Ibn Al-Mughira, Fakih Ibn Al-Mughira and Abdallah Ibn Abi'l-Rabi'a. All of them went to Sana'a as traders, as sources corroborate.[1]

Sixth, the researcher gives the reader the impression that Yemen is one thing and Aden is something else, while the fact is that, the latter is a port of the former. In the same way, Najran was part of North Yemeni borders at that time.

Seventh, Crone disregarded the Qurashi delegations that came to congratulate Saif Ibn Dhi Yazan on his victory over the Ethiopian rule of Yemen, and the acclamation of Arab delegations for him, including the delegation of Quraysh. Arabic sources mention that Abd Al-Muttalib, the grandfather of the Prophet (PBUH), was among the delegations that came to Saif Ibn Dhi Yazan. This was not only possible but probable since Mecca had political and commercial interests with Yemen, especially after the attempt of Abraha to conquer Mecca and destroy Ka'ba, in addition to his confrontation with Abd Al-Muattalib.

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[1] Crone, op. cit., p. 70.

Eighth, Crone was not satisfied with the significant number of individuals mentioned in Islamic sources, which talked about their trade whether in Yemen or on its borders. It seems that she wanted to see all Meccan traders there. Even if she had been satisfied, she would have looked for another excuse to deny their trade in Yemen, as she was already preoccupied with the view to object to all fundamentals of Islamic history, and consequently the interpretation of Surat Quraysh in the Qur'an.

This does not mean that accurate standards of investigations and scientific criticism of history were not applied to the accounts in Islamic sources, provided that they should be based on firm principles and concrete grounds to reach the facts with total objectivity. In light of the above analysis, it is clear that Meccan trade with Yemen did not mean the trade with Najran only, but it was throughout Yemen, as the sources confirmed. This is as attested to by the large number of individuals who were there. Indeed, some sources clearly mentioned that they were there for the purpose of trading.

Trade with Ethiopia:

Crone says*: "Ethiopia is a problematic case. It is identified as a Qurashi matjar of some importance in both Ibn Al-Kalbi's account and elsewhere, yet there is practically no concrete evidence on the trade in question. One story has it that Qurashi traders return from Ethiopia via the Yemen, but some hold the traders in question never went further than Yemen. Another has it that 'Umara b. Al-Walid Al-Makhzumi sailed to Ethiopia with 'Amr b. Al-Aas for trade, but the exegetical variants on this story make it reflect political rather than commercial relations. Yet another exegetical story said a mawla of B. Sahm, the clan of 'Amr b. Al-Aas, sailed to Ethiopia for trade in the company of two Christian traders from Palestine, but a variant version mentioned the mawla went to Syria. No doubt, there will be other stories in the vast traditions, but the enthusiastic claim that "evidence for the brisk commercial intercourse between Mecca and Abyssinia is everywhere" can scarcely be said to be correct.*

There is no information on where the traders went in Ethiopia. The name of Adulis, the famous Ethiopian port, is unknown to the sources on pre-Islamic Arabia and the rise of Islam, and though all the stories on Quraysh in Ethiopia, be it as traders or as diplomats, involve the Negus, the tradition also fails to mention Axum. In fact, it would seem to be wholly ignorant Ethiopian place names. Hashim dies in Gaza and Muttalib makes it to Radman in Ibn al-Kalbi's ilaf-tradition, but their brother 'Abd Shams is dispatched in Mecca itself.

How then are we to envisage the trade between Mecca and Ethiopia? One suggestion is that is was the Ethiopians who came to Mecca (or at least Shu'ayba) rather than the other way round. Of Ethiopians in Mecca there is, in fact some recollection. Thus one story about the origins of Qusayy's fortune is that he killed and plundered an Ethiopian noble (azim) who had come to Mecca for trade. One version of the story of how Meccan trade came to an end has it that Ethiopians would bring foodstuffs to Jedda (sic) so that the Meccans no longer had to make their tiresome journeys to Syria. And the Makhzumi quarter in Mecca is said to have had a dar-uluj at which Ethiopians were to be found. Residues of Abraha's army are also supposed to have stayed behind in Mecca, working as craftsmen and shepherds. Some, though not all, of these stories could be taken to reflect the presence in Mecca of Ethiopian freedmen rather than free traders, and the tradition is at all events adamant that the Meccans visited Ethiopia itself, where they had dealings with its ruler. The suggestion that Ethiopian traders would visit Mecca thus does not dispose of the problem.

Another possibility would be that Meccan trade with Ethiopia was not a trade with Ethiopia at all, but rather one with Yemen under Ethiopian rule. It is the same clan, Makhzum, which is associated with trade in both Ethiopia and Yemen, and given the dearth of information on Ethiopian trade, it is odd that some sources should present Meccan trade as one with Syria and Ethiopia, or Syria, Egypt, and Ethiopia, to the exclusion of the Yemen; if babasba here meant Abyssinians who happened to be in the Yemen rather than Abyssinia itself, the claim would be less

odd. But though one source duly identifies the ruler from whom Quraysh obtained permission to trade in Yemen as an Abyssinian, the tradition does not go so far as to conflate this ruler, or other rulers of Yemen, with the Negus himself. Moreover, it insists that Qurayshis would cross the sea to get to Ethiopia. This solution is thus also unsatisfactory.

A third possibility is that Quraysh would trade with Ethiopia as residents in Yemen rather than as citizens of Mecca. Insofar as they went to Ethiopia, they must have done so via Yemen. The Muhajjirun are admittedly said to have sailed there directly from Shu'ayba, but they did so in ships, clearly foreign, that merely happened to put in there, and it was to Yemen that 'IKrima b. Abi Jahl fled after the conquest of Mecca with the intention, according to Tabari, of crossing to Ethiopia. It was also via Yemen that the above-mentioned traders in Ethiopia returned. According to Waqidi, Ikrima embarked somewhere on the coast of Tihama (rather than at Aden), and this agrees well enough with the information on where Meccans traded in Yemen. All this and the fact that the same Makhzum are associated with Yemeni and Ethiopian trade could be taken to mean that Meccan residents in Yemen participated in the local trade with Ethiopia, selling local rather than Meccan goods in Ethiopia and distributing Ethiopian goods locally rather than at the Meccan markets. The tradition does, of course, insist that it was Meccan rather than Yemeni leather goods that the Negus esteemed so highly, and generally thinks of Ethiopia trade as conducted from Mecca itsel;. but this could be explained away, and we certainly never see Qurayshis distributing Ethiopian goods at markets such as 'Ukaz. If

Qurayshi trade with Ethiopia was conducted by a diaspora in Yemen, it would be less odd that the tradition remembers nothing about it except the fact that it existed.

Against this explanation must be set the fact that some accounts present Ethiopia trade as an extension of Meccan links with Byzantine Syria rather than with Yemen. Thus, one version of the ilaf-tradition has it that it was the Byzantine emperor who obtained permission for Quraysh to trade in Ethiopia. An isolated tradition claims that 'Abd Shams, the traditional founder of Ethiopia trade, died in Gaza on a par with his brother Hashim. The mawla who sails to Ethiopia with Christians from Palestine is presumably envisaged as setting out from Ayla. And 'Amr b. al-'Aas is supposed to have traded in Syria, Egypt, and Ethiopia alike. On the whole it seems reasonable to dismiss this evidence as triggered by, among other things, the well-known relations between Byzantium and Ethiopia and to stay with the explanation of Ethiopia trade as one conducted by a diaspora in Yemen. But no solution seems to be exactly right.

What makes the problem so intractable is the fact that Ethiopia is extraordinarily prominent from a political and religious point of view in the traditions on the rise of Islam. Ethiopia was a land beyond the sea in which both Muslims and non-Muslims will seek refuge, and the ruler of which is familiar to all, though especially to the Muslims: he receives them, refuses to hand them over, and in due course converts to Islam as the only foreign ruler to accept Muhammad's invitation to adopt the new religion. This fits well with the fact that there is a large number of Ethiopian loan words in Arabic relating, above all, to

things religious (though many or most could in principle be South Arabian, too).

But it is not easy to say what sort of historical relations this evidence reflects. It is customary to explain it with reference to commercial links, a venerable approach inasmuch as early Muslim scholars did the same. But hardly any of the loan words are commercial terms. The overwhelming majority entered Arabic via the Qur'an, for all that Muhammad neither traded in Ethiopia nor went there as refugee, and practically nothing is known to the tradition about the trade that they are supposed to reflect. It would thus appear misguided to stretch such evidence as we have on trade in order to explain the mysterious Ethiopian link, this link being more likely to explain the evidence on trade when or if it is identified. Meanwhile, one can only say that however we are to envisage Qurashi trade with Ethiopia, it is unlikely to have played a major role in the Meccan economy."[1]

Crone mentioned above many Makkans who were in Ethiopia, and she mentioned some narrations about the existence of Ethiopians in Mecca. However, she preferred to say these Ethiopians are those who were in Yemen and not in Ethiopia per se. She presents another possibility that Quraysh might have traded with Ethiopia in Yemeni market. Thus, the reader can notice here that she confirms indirectly the arrival of Quraysh to Yemeni market, which she had doubted earlier. Concerning the issue that Makkans did not move to Ethiopia and did not cross the sea, she says: "we cannot agree to such matter." At the same time, she rejects

[1] Crone, op. cit., pp. 124-129.

that Ethiopian trade played any major role in Meccan economy, without providing a single convincing evidence to confirm her conclusion. However, the fact is contrary to her conclusion for the following reasons:

1. Abu Al-Na'eem mentions the question of the Negus to the envoy of Quraysh when he asked him about his existence if not for trading; which means that the Negus was aware of the arrival of the Quraysh in Ethiopia for trade.[1]

2. The Arabs knew the Audlis Port since a long time before Islam, as opposed to what Crone said. This can be proven through the poetry of Turfah IbnAl-Abd who lived in the late third century in his poetry.[2]

3. Ibn Ishaq mentioned that Ikrima Ibn Abijahl fled to Yemen, and after his wife, Um Hakim, asked the Messenger (PBUH) for safety, she followed him to Yemen, and brought him back. Al-Waqidi mentions that his wife followed him to a coast of Tihama and brought him back to the Messenger of Allah (PBUH). Al-Tabari mentions after his flight to Yemen, he wanted to sail to Ethiopia. This implied that he was familiar with Ethiopia, in one way or another. Therefore, he thought about it as a shelter after his flight from Mecca.[3] All the above sources mentioned his arrival to Yemen. Only one of these mentioned his arrival to a coast of Tihama, without specifying the exact place.

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1 See ***Dala'il Al-Nubuwwa***, p. 197; quoted by Crone p. 124,

[2] Al-Zuzni, Sharh Al-Mu'alqat Al-Sab'a, Mu'alaqat Turfah, p. 61. See also footnote No. 112 below.

[3] Ibn Hisham, ***As-Seerah***, Part 2., p. 418; Al-Waqidi, Al-Maghaazi, Part 2., p. 851; Al-Tabari, Part 3, p. 61.

4. Shu'ayba Port, which is close to the current Jeddah Port, was used before Islam for the purpose of trade with Ethiopia. The Arabs knew how to sail across the sea, as opposed to what some might think. One of the strongest evidences is that the Noble Qur'an mentions many phrases on navigation, sea and ships. If the people of Mecca and Medina were not familiar with these concepts, the Qur'an naturally would not have addressed them using these verses. Among these are the following:

(Al-Baqara:164),(Al-Kahf:71 and 79),(Al-Ankabout: 15 and 65),(Al-Zukhruf:12), (Hud:41),(Al-A'raaf:64), (Al-Nahl:14),(Al-Mu'minoon:22) and (Ibrahim:32). Al-Jahiz confirmed that Quraysh used ships for their own to transport their commodities between them and Ethiopia. It may come to the reader's mind why Ethiopia did not undertake their trade themselves and transport it to the north via the Red Sea instead of handing it to Quraysh to carry out this task. The abundance of coral reeves in the north of the Red Sea might explain this, as they were hampering maritime transportation at that time. Therefore, Ethiopia had no other choice except to hand its trade to Quraysh, especially after the Persian conquest, the opponent of the Byzantium state of Ethiopia, which was loyal to Byzantium.[1]

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[1]. Al-Tabari, ***Tareekh***, Part 3, p. 61; Al-Hamawi, Mu'jam Al-Buldan, Madat al-Shu'ybah; Al-Jahiz, Abi Uthman 'Amr IbnBahr (d. 225 Hl 878 AD); ***Al-Bayan wa Tabyyin***, Cairo, Vol. 1, 1926, pp. 207-208. One of the strongest evidences is that the Noble Qur'an mentions many phrases on navigation, sea and ships. If the people of Mecca and Medina were not aware of these phrases, the Qur'an naturally would not address them with these phrases. Among these verses mentioned in the Noble Qur'an that point out sailing across the sea are: (Al-Baqara:164), (Al-Kahf:71 and 79), (Al-Al-Ankabut:15

5. That the Messenger (PBUH) did not go to Ethiopia was considered by Crone as an excuse to say that there was no direct relation with Quraysh. The reader can notice that when the Messenger (PBUH) had relation with Syria, as mentioned in the Islamic sources, she raised many doubts about it; and when he had no contact with Ethiopia she asked for it. In fact, the Messenger (PBUH) did not go to Ethiopia, but he sent senior Muslims there, when the non-believers of Makkah oppressed them. Naturally, it is impossible that the Messenger would send them to a place that they had no previous acquaintance with. Had they gone there without prior knowledge of the place, what would have secured their lives? The sources, which Crone referred to, indicated that Quraysh knew Ethiopia well and they had good relations with Ethiopians.

6. The Muhajjirun (i.e., immigrants) sailed directly from Shu'ayba by ships. Crone says: *"The Muhajjirun are admittedly said to have sailed there directly from Shu'ayba; but they did so in ships, clearly foreign, that merely happened to be there."*[1]

We do not know what caused Crone to believe that the ships were foreign without supporting her claim with any reference.

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and 65), (Al-Zukhruf:12), (Hud:41), (Al-A'raaf:64), (Al-Nahl:14), (Al-Mou'minoon:22) and (Ibrahim:32). There is a good study conducted by Charlesworth in his book entitled, ***Trade Routes and Commerce of the Roman Empire***, in which he mentioned various reasons that made it difficult for navigation in the Red Sea specially its northern part, besides the coral reeves and the north wind most of the year.

[1] Crone, op. cit., p. 127.

Al-Tabari mentions the following:

With the help of Allah, when the Muslims reached the port, two ships came and carried people to Ethiopia for half Dinar each. Ibn Sa'ad confirms what Al-Tabari said in this regard.[1] We can be certain from the context that there were ships sailing between Ethiopia and Shu'ayba directly. If these ships were not working in commercial transportation, what was their business then? It is clear from the context that these ships were used for commercial transportation. Crone's view that these ships were foreign is equal to the possibility that Makkah hired ships from Azd Oman who were professional navigators. They used to bring Indian and Ceylon goods to the gulf ports to trade with Ethiopia. What supports this view is the statement of Al-Jahiz, mentioned above, that Quraysh used ships for their own trade between them and Ethiopia. It is likely that these ships were Ethiopian. However, the principles of historical research oblige us to make it clear to the reader, and not to assert it without clear evidence in order to follow the right method of research, something that Crone repeatedly claimed without implementation.

7. Crone's rejection of Quraysh trade with Ethiopia, based on unknown names of places is a weak opinion. The name of Habasha (i.e., Ethiopia) was very common among Qurashis. The Arabic language still uses the name Habasha to refer to Ethiopia. So, the meaning of 'Habasha'

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[1] We referred to the same edition that Crone referred to, i.e., Vol. 1, p. 1181, Ibn Sa'ad Al-Tabaqat, Part 1, p. 204. On the Arab sailing across the sea and their arrival to India and Ceylon before Islam. See Sihab, ibid., pp. 226-283, in which he mentioned measuring the wind speed and duration of each journey according to the old sources.

was not meant to refer to the Hibshi slaves in any way, though there were many of them in Makkah. However, other races shared them slavery before Islam.

8. In fact, we did not directly see Qurashis or others distributing Ethiopian goods in Ukaz market. But, we inquire about the way of arrival of Ethiopian goods at a time when there were no ways of transportation between Al-Hira and Ghassanids during the conflict between Persians and Romans, along the trade route which goes across the Arabian Peninsula from north-east to north-west. Among these distinguished African goods were ostrich feathers, elephant ivory, ebony, costly leathers, slaves and others. All these used to reach Persia and the Byzantine world during Abraha's reign of Yemen who was in hostility with Persians, or during the reign of Dhi Yazan and his successors who were in hostility with Byzantium. These goods used to arrive in Shu'ayba, and then Quraysh caravans, based on the Ilaf-tradition, carried them according to the demand of Al-Hira, Persia and Byzantium.

9. Al-Asfahani, in his book, ***Al-'Aghaani***, mentioned that Imarah Ibn walid Al-Makhzumi and Amr Ibn Al-'Ass Ibn Wa'il Al-Sahmi traded with Ethiopia and contacted the Negus. This is contrary to the view that Qurashis used only to wait for the arrival of Ethiopians' trade to them.[1]

10. The reader can notice the use of the term 'Diaspora' more than once while talking about the Quraysh trade in Yemen. This use of this term is not accepted in the field of trade, because if it is true, then it has to be used, without exception, to all that period of time. It is an

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[1] Al-Asfahani, Al-A'ghani, Part 9, p. 55.

attempt to associate this unreal term with the tribe of the Messenger (PBUH).

It is obvious that Crone did not present a single concrete evidence to support her claim in rejecting what the Islamic sources mentioned about the commercial relation between Quraysh and Ethiopia. These sources did not describe such trade in detail because they had no direct connection with the special political events of the rise of Islam. However, some details were sporadically mentioned in their writings confirm the trade between Makkah and Ethiopia.

In the conclusion of discussing this matter, it is possible to provide the following facts:

The shortage in the sources of agriculture and pasturing was a strong motivation for Makkah to work in the field of trade, unlike Taif and Madinah, cities that had better climates led to better livelihood. Quraysh had been trading since a long time; we mentioned earlier that Quraysh might have taken their name from the nature of its work in this field roughly since the third century. After Qussai had organized Makkah's affairs, established security and cared for the pilgrims, its reputation spread out among the Arab tribes. In addition, international conditions facilitated the opportunity for Makkah to play a role in the eastern trade when the trading routes were reallocated to the western side. These conditions are summarized as follows:

- The conflict between the two great powers: Persia and Rome led to obstruction of the eastern trade.

• The conflict between the two Kingdoms: Al-Hira and Ghassanids stirred up the conflict between Persia and Rome. This situation pushed the trade routes to the west of the Arabian Peninsula.

• The conditions of the Arabs deteriorated in the south because of the Ethiopia's invasion. Besides, Abraha got involved in establishing his reign there after usurping power from the Arab rulers and the King of Ethiopia, in addition to his disappointment after his failure to conquer Makkah.

• The reputation of Makkah rose after the defeat of Abraha and occupied the top position among Arab tribes in the Arabian Peninsula. There is no doubt that the situation was strongly reflected on its trade, and it had become an intersection for three routes used by the eastern trade (the route of the East of the Peninsula, the route of the South and the route of the Red Sea) to carry the goods. The first route includes Wadi Al-Rumma and Wadi Al-Dawasir. The Bahraini Arabs used to come to them and bring with them the trade of the East to avoid the route of the Euphrates where war confrontations took place. The Makkans started organizing caravans on the second route after they were cooperating with Yemeni traders with their caravans. The Meccan traders also succeeded to attract the African trade to the Asian shore off the Red Sea to carry it to the North due to piracy there and the danger of its coral reeves. Crone noticed the last ship that came from Ethiopia or from Yemen was traced back to the year 570

A.D.[1], but she did not mention who undertook the trade transportation after that.

- The border control system between Persia and Rome forced the traders to evade custom duties and find alternative routes, or at least saved some of the customs by paying either to Persia or to Rome.

- Makkah's potentiality was the most important factor that led it to win the competition when the above-mentioned international conditions were available. Makkah benefited from these international conditions and took a neutral position in the conflict between the Persians and the Romans in the region. The reason was that Persia had its interest to sell the Eastern goods that came to them, and Byzantium was in need of these goods, but the war between them broke off the routes. As Byzantium failed to conquer Makkah through the attempt of Abraha's campaign, there was no way out except to leave the Arabian trade in the hand of Qurashis. Therefore, Hashim obtained a letter from Roman Caesar permitting him to trade in Syria.2 He organized the two journeys of winter and summer for Quraysh, gathered the transportation means, and made treaties with the concerned kings. This is the important factor in which Ethiopia, Yemen and Al-Hira failed to achieve, so Makkah won the competition and could alone take the advantage of the timely international situations. Thus, the heads of the Arab tribes, along the trading route, became partners in Makkan trade

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[1]. Crone, op. cit., p. 41.

[2] See footnote No. 89 above.

according to the treaties that Hashim and his brothers made with them. Therefore, they were responsible to secure Quraysh caravans in their territories, since Quraysh trade became their trade too. Furthermore, Makkah had men at that period with good qualities of statesmen, such as discretion, wisdom, and prudence and feeling repression. Consequently, Quraysh had the ability to lead all the Arabs with no contestant or opponent. [1]

To have a complete picture, we have to clarify the reality of these caravans that carried the trade, and enabled Makkans to achieve enormous wealth. A caravan was sometimes of more than two thousand camels, each used to carry two hundred kilograms or more, road explorers were ahead of them and the guards around them. These caravans used to rest at particular stations in 'Ayla, Ghaza, Busra in ash-Sham, i.e., the Levant, so that the Byzantine government guaranteed its share of customs.

Crone mentioned there were sixty-five depots along this route from northernmost to southernmost where traders used to rest. Hira market was one of the outlets for Yemeni perfumes. Al-Hakam Ibn Abi'l-As Ibn Ummaya Ibn Abd Shams went to Hira for the sale of perfume, and there was a market in Hira where people used to get together every year.[2] The commercial store of Nawfal Ibn Abd Manaf was in Iraq.

Ibn Habib commented on the Quraysh's massive Ilaf-caravans saying: each of these caravans' leaders was the head of a group of his fellow traders. This confirms

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[1] See Sihab, ibid., pp. 219-226.

[2] Al-Asfahani, Al-'Aghani, Part 16, p. 95.

that their trade was not a retail trade of vendors in the surrounding Arabian districts or with common customers in the South of Syria. What Al-Marzuqi mentioned about Aden market showed that the perfume of all people had come from Sheba. None of the non-Arabs knew how to manufacture it. Also the maritime traders used to go back proudly with manufactured perfume to Al-Sind and India, and the land traders used to take it to Persia and Rome.[1]

Al-Marzuqi identified in this text that the maritime traders seemed to be Indians and Omanis. On the other hand, the land traders, undoubtedly, were Arabs; and among them were the Qurashis who were the leaders of desert caravans in the western part of the Arabian Peninsula in the sixth century A.D., who certainly undertook an important role with the Byzantine side. In the winter journey, they used to bring the South Arabian goods including perfumes and the Eastern goods, and to take them to Makkah to the local market to get their needs, then to take the remaining in the summer caravan to the North, to Syria. This does not contradict with the familiarity of the Arabs with the Byzantine perfumes, which used to have their own markets in their territories and used to be brought by the Jews of Madinah during the time of the Messenger (PBUH). This commercial exchange is well known at all times and places due to the various tastes of human beings and their cultural and financial status.

[1] See the allegation of Crone that the Arabian Trade was retail trading, Crone, op. cit., p. 134; Al-Marzuqi, Al-Azmina, Part 3, p. 164.

The Makkans achieved enormous wealth from their business in the world trade. For example, Hakim Ibn Khuzam collected great wealth which enabled him to free a hundred slaves in the pre-Islamic time on the Day of Arafat, and he slaughtered a hundred camels on the Day of Sacrifice. In addition, he did the same when he embraced Islam. Abu Bakr collected from his trading work a wealth of forty thousand Dirhams. He spent thirty five thousand of this wealth in freeing the slaves who embraced Islam to help them get rid of the torture of the unbelievers of Makkah.

Abdullah Ibn Jad'an (the jeweler), the head of Tamim, was one of the richest people in Makkah who gained most of his wealth from trade. Abu Sufyan Ibn Harb was one of the senior traders of Makkah, who used to fund Makkan traders. The value of Abu Sufyan's caravan was about fifty thousand Dinars before the Battle of Badr; the share of Abu 'Uhayha Said Ibn 'Al-Ass alone in this caravan was thirty thousand Dinars. Al-Walid Ibn Al-Mughira Ibn Abdalla Ibn Amr of Makhzum, the richest of the Makhzum clan, was known for excessive richness and was known as "Al-Adl" because his wealth was approximately equal to all Qurayshis' wealth.[1] Qurashis used to clothe the Ka'ba one year and he used to clothe it another year. Such wealth was not new to the Arabs.

Pliny mentions that: "Arabs were the richest world nation, owing to the flow of wealth from Rome and Persia to them and its accumulation in their hands. They used to sell what they had got from the sea and from their forests

[1] See Salamah, ibid., on the wealth of the Arab traders, pp. 245-275, and the sources mentioned there.

(i.e., incense and myrrh), and in return used not to buy anything."[1]

Although this is an exaggeration, it reflects the situation of the first century A.D. and alludes to traders of Sheba. However, this situation returned to Quraysh in the sixth century.

Therefore, the three conclusions of Crone mentioned in her introduction of the sixth chapter, which are: "First, it was not a transit trade. Second, it was not a trade of the kind that attracted the attention of the inhabitants of Egypt and the Fertile Crescent. Third, it was not a trade that presupposed control of any trade routes in Arabia" were disproved, and the facts are completely different from what she purported. In addition, her questioning the location of Makkah, her rejection of the pilgrimage to the Holy House, her allegation of a big temple in the North that the Arabs used to visit, as well as her denial of Quraysh world trade, which started from Makkah was a prelude to allege that there was a center for Quraysh in the North, and therefore, for the Messenger (PBUH) and his Islamic Da'wa, i.e., call to Islam. These are the issues, which we are going to discuss later.

[1] Pliny, p. 461.

The Fourth Theme

Islam Propagation (Da'wa) Center

Claim of the Existence of a Center in the North of the Arabian Peninsula where Islam Rose

The claim that there existed a center in the North of the Arabian Peninsula where Islam rose was a figment of the imagination, as explained before. This was a prelude of what is more serious than just the denial of the occurrence of the name of Makkah in the books of the Greek and Roman writers since the second century A.D. If it did not exist, which actually did, this is considered dereliction of sources as Makkah's existence is an established fact.

The denial of its existence entails the denial of Arabs heading towards Ka'ba and questioning the international trade of Quraysh before Islam. The main objective of Crone's study is to question Islamic sources, chiefly what is stated in the Holy Qur'an about Makkah and the existence of Ka'ba there, since it was established by Ibrahim and Ismail (peace be upon them), by claiming the existence of a center in the North of the Arabian Peninsula where the prophet Mohammad (pbuh) emerged and where the Islamic Da'wa commenced, which is contrary to what is well-known and proven.

Crone says, *"Nowhere is it stated that Quraysh, (the Arab kings), were the people who used to supply such-and-such regions with such-and-such goods. It was only Muhammad himself who was known to have been a trader. And as for the city, it was long assumed to have been*

Yathrib. Of Mecca there is no mention for a long time, and the first sources to mention the sanctuary fail to give a name for it, whereas the first source to name it fails to locate it in Arabia. Jacob of Edessa knew of the Ka'bah toward which Muslims prayed, locating it in a place considerably closer to Ptolemy's Moka than to modern Mecca or, in other words, too far North for orthodox accounts of the rise of Islam. But of the commercial significance of this place he would appear to have been completely ignorant. Whatever the implications of this evidence for the history of the Muslim sanctuary, it is plain that the Qurashi trading centre was not a place with which the subjects of the Muslims were familiar."[1]

What Crone mentioned above was not everything. She also added the following, "*From the point of view of the rise of Islam, the problem may be restated as follows. We seem to have all the ingredients for Muhammad's career in Northwest Arabia. Qurashi trade sounds perfectly viable, indeed more intelligible, without its South Arabian and Ethiopian extensions, and there is a case for a Qurashi trading center, or at least diaspora, in the North. One might locate it in Ptolemy's Moka. Somewhere in the North, too, there was a desert sanctuary of pan-Arabian importance, according to Nonnosus. Mecca originated as a desert sanctuary, according to Kalbi.*

It still sounds like one in the accounts of Muawiya's building activities there, and the sanctuary that Muawiya turned into "towns and palaces" must have been located somewhere in the North. Jewish communities are well-

[1] Crone, op. cit., p. 137.

attested for Northwest Arabia. Even Abrahamic monotheism is documented there, and the prophet who was to make a new religion of this belief was himself a trader in Northwest Arabia. Yet everything is supposed to have happened much further South, in a place described as a sanctuary town inhabited since time immemorial, located, according to some, in an unusually fertile environment, associated with Southern tribes such as Jurhum and Khuzaa, linked with Ethiopia and Yemen, and endowed with a building accommodating Hubal and his priests."[1]

Commenting on what has been mentioned, the following queries are raised:

1. What does Crone mean by saying that nobody mentioned that Quraysh were the people who used to supply such-and-such place with such-and-such goods? Does she mean by that Byzantine sources? And are these sources the only accredited ones while the Islamic sources are not - from her point of view- and should therefore be ignored? The Byzantine sources rarely touch upon the economic situation in the Byzantine Empire itself and happen only when it has some relevance to a political or a military event. This was the habit of the writers and historians in recording history in that early period of time. Therefore, I enquire about the information they offered about the Byzantine Empire trade with Al-Ghasasinah (sons of Ghassan), and before them the trade between Al-Anbat, Palmyra and the Roman Empire. Many Arabic sources mention Quraysh trade and their trade movements. Although many of these sources indirectly mention trade,

[1] Crone, op. cit., p. 196-199.

they cover many of its aspects and are sufficient to reflect an image of it within the available potential of the age.

2. When she says, "…and the first sources to mention the sanctuary fail to give a name for it…", she is mistaken because these sources are available and she knows them. They are represented by what Pliny, Ptolemy, Ammianus Marcellinus mentioned. In their writings we find clear mention of Bano Joreis, MaKoraba and the holy city. It has been proven that the indications mentioned by them point to Makkah. However, Crone does not want to admit this fact; rather she raises doubts about it under weak pretexts which have been refuted while discussing the first theme of this study.

3. Crone says, "*Jacob of Edessa knew of the Ka'ba toward which the Muslims prayed, locating it in a place considerably closer to Ptolemy's Moka than to modern Mecca or, in other words, too far North for orthodox accounts of the rise of Islam.*"[1] Moka, which was mentioned by Ptolemy is located in Arabic Petra which is an inland town without a port, whereas Makkah which concerns us was referred to by Ptolemy as Makoraba. He also mentioned its port as explained before. It is Crone who proposes that Ptolemy was supposed to call it Moka. She is here considering a hypothesis she made as an established fact which is actually contrary to the facts.

4. Ptolemy is not to be blamed because of his ignorance about the commercial role of Makoraba in the first half of the second century A.D. for a plain reason: its commercial role had not yet been clear. Prominent trade activities of Makkah started in the late fifth century and

[1] Crone, op. cit., p. 137. Also see p. 14 and the following pages.

became more active in the beginning of the sixth century, while Ptolemy wrote in the first half of the second century A.D. Why, then, do we blame him on something which occurred after his age?

5. Crone proposes that, "*We seem to have all the ingredients for Muhammad's career in Northwest Arabia. Qurashi trade sounds perfectly viable, indeed more intelligible, without its South Arabian and Ethiopian extensions.*" Then she adds: "*If the Qur'an were our only source on the rise of Islam, we would know that the rise of the new religion had something to do with a man called Muhammad, who claimed to be an apostle of God and who operated somewhere in Northwest Arabia, apparently in the vicinity of Lot's remains in the Balqa'; but we would not be able to say anything about the historical events to the acceptance of his message.*"[1]

Imagination has played a clear dramatic role in this concern. We find her inventing events and interweaving them with a fertile imagination that can compose a story, but fails to write a piece of historical research. When she writes about the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) that he "claimed to be an apostle of God", she assumes the position of an antagonist, not a researcher. Earlier, she denied the commercial role of Makkah, deliberately flouting all the sources that point to this fact. However, she implicitly recognizes its role and she thinks its role could have been more vital if it was in the North. Then she offers warped suggestions which are soon introduced to us as established facts without taking into account the most basic principles of historical research. She states that the

[1] Crone, op. cit., p. 204.

Prophet's message "*operated somewhere in Northwest Arabia, apparently in the vicinity of Lot's remains in the Balqa'; but we would not be able to say anything about the historical events to the acceptance of his message.*" Here, we find her locating this trade center in Moka which was mentioned by Ptolemy and by which she means Makkah.

She also associates it with the sanctuary that Nonnosus mentioned and was discussed before in the first theme of this study. She also says that according to Al-Kalbi, Makkah originated as a desert sanctuary, overlooking the fact that most of the Arab land is desert and consequently, most of its sanctuaries are in the desert while the temple pointed out by Nonnosus is most probably the house of Makkah (Ka'ba). It is located behind Tayyi Mountains and there is a reference in the text of Epiphanes to the holy months which makes it probable to refer to Makkah. Moreover, if the sanctuary in the North that Crone mentions in the sixth chapter had a pan-Arabian respect as she claims, wasn't it more feasible for Abraha to send his army to that sanctuary to demolish it and distract the Arabs' attention from pilgrimage to it instead of trying to demolish Ka'ba which is historically recognized to be in the Holy City of Makkah up to this day?

After Crone creates suspicions in the minds of the readers about the existence of a sanctuary in the North which was a place of pilgrimage for Arabs, she took the opportunity of construction activities during the reign of Muawiyah Ibn Abi Sufyan, the first Umayyad caliph in Damascus, the capital of the new caliphate, and in its vicinity to continue her psychological pressure on the reader. She suggests to the reader that building and

construction activities were on the ruins of that sanctuary town to complete the picture of the imaginary story she has concocted. The major blunder she makes here is that all the references she cites are about Makkah and there is no mention whatsoever of that imaginary sanctuary located in the north. She also adds that the message of Islam was supposed to rise in Yathreb, not in Makkah. This confirms the clear mistakes she has deliberately committed. Had this been the way historical issues are dealt with, anybody, let alone, any historian would have been able to eliminate the greatest dates.

Continuing, she points out that, "*The belief that Abraham had bequeathed a monotheist religion to his Arab descendants is attested for Northwest Arabia as early as the fifth century in a Greek source. It is thus not impossible that Quraysh should have adopted Abrahamic descent and beliefs even before Islam.*"[1]

What Crone suggests here is that Islam is derived from Ibrahim's (pbuh) dogma. That the Greek sources demonstrate its existence in the North of the Peninsula since the fifth century A.D. is for and not against Quraysh because it confirms their knowledge about it. This fact is frequently mentioned in Islamic sources which dealt with the pre-Islamic period. It was also mentioned by the Jews of Madinah. In addition, the existence of Jewish groups in the Northwest of Arabia is a well-known fact.

The Northern commercial route was heading towards the Mediterranean across Palestine to Gaza. Moreover, Ibrahim's (pbuh) monotheist religion was documented in

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[1] Crone, op. cit., p. 190.

Makkah according to Islamic sources. Pilgrimage, according to the religion of Ibrahim (pbuh), was one of its remains. That Arabs swore by Allah, and used Almighty Allah's name in naming people like Abdullah, Abdul Mutaleb, Abdul Hakam, etc. is an evidence of what I say. Arabs knew the holy months and generally preserved their sanctity before the coming of Islam.All these are remnants of Ibrahim's (pbuh) monotheistic religion which was mixed up with many manifestations of idolatry. The main reason behind this form of religious corruption is the same that lead the followers of all religions before Islam to mix up the divine messages with paganism. Ignorance spread as a result of illiteracy, on the one hand, and on the other hand, the interference of priests in distorting the divine messages for their own aggrandizement and the vested interests of their worldly rulers.

The fact is that the source of all divine religions is the same God - Almighty Allah - The Creator. Their essence is submission to the only one God and His commands to establish a righteous human society. All divine religions included the first aspect. The second aspect was revealed by Almighty Allah in stages, each stage suited the intellectual and cultural level that human civilization had reached at the time of the given religion. All religions had local missions, while Islamic Shariah (Islamic Law)covers all aspects of life for all of humanity without exception, hence its universal nature as a result of the maturity of human development and the availability of the means of recording and preserving the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah (narrations about deeds and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad).

What is not understood is why this religious corruption and the artificial interweaving between them to change events, places and sites. What would have harmed the historians and Muslim writers if they had narrated the events had they occurred as Crone alleged? That would not have minimized or added to the events which were associated with the rise of Islam. Had it been predestined for the events to take place in the North, the historians would not have found any harm in pointing to that.

Is it logical that a nation gets involved in establishing a fabricated historical event in its sources over time? The Islamic sources have pointed the visit made by Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) twice to Makka commercial market in the North, to the migration of early Muslims to Abyssinia, and to the migration of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) himself to Madinah. The same sources also mentioned all the idols and their sanctuaries. On what ground, then, do they avoid to mention one of these sanctuaries if it really existed, as Crone claims? She has always demonstrated consistent scrutiny, but then distorted, and questioned all Islamic sources. This will be clear when we introduce the coming topic of the date of the Battle of Badr. This battle was the first military confrontation between Muslims and disbelievers and it was pointed out in the Holy Qur'an and ended with victory to Islam and Muslims.

The Fifth Theme

The Date of the Battle of Badr

Crone says, "*That there was no continuous transmission is a fundamental point which I should like to corroborate with references to the date of the battle of Badr. The history of this date illustrates the role played by the Qur'an in the formation of the tradition at the expense of recollection. The agents may or may not have been storytellers in this particular case, but either way the moral is the same: as new information was created, earlier information was lost.*

What is the date of the battle of Badr? There is complete agreement in the tradition that it is Ramadan, year 2. What we are concerned with here is the month. On the face of it, the month is confirmed by the Qur'an: here Ramadan is given as the month of the furqan (2:181)[1]; and the "day of furqan on which the two parties met" (8:42)[2] is identified by the exegetical tradition as the battle of Badr. The combination of scholarly unanimity and what appears to be scriptural confirmation would thus make the month in which the battle of Badr took place one of the few unshakable facts of early Islamic history. Naturally, it is not of great importance in itself, but a correctly preserved date for so early an event would do something to vindicate the general reliability of the historical tradition. There is,

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[1] The verse number here is wrong; the correct number is 185, Surat Al-Baqarah (The Cow).

[2] "On the day of discrimination (between right and wrong), the day when the two forces met (the Battle of Badr)." The verse number is again incorrect. It is verse 41, Surat Al-Anfal (The Spoils of War).

of course, a weak link in the argument in that the Qur'an itself does not identify the "day of furqan" as the battle of Badr; and the furqan that was "sent down" in Ramadan scarcely sounds like a reference to a battle. Skeptics might thus argue that the Qur'an, far from confirming the date given in the tradition, actually generated it. But until recently such skeptics had the unanimity of the tradition against them.

In 1956, however, Grohmann published an eighth-century papyrus from Kirbat Al-Mird in Palestine. The papyrus is fragmentary and Grohmann's reading is undoubtedly wrong in places; but unless he has totally misread it, the papyrus gives us a deviant date for the Battle of Badr. The papyrus begins by listing some names, of which only Waqid b. Abdallah, B. Adi b. Ka'b, Mughira, and Hakam are legible or easily reconstructed. In line six it mentions the date of "fourteen months from Muharram" and states that "they went out to Badr." In line seven we are told that "They met at Badr," the date being now given as "eighteen months from Muharram." The last line mentions Muhammad, Mecca, Quraysh, and a certain Majid."[1]

It is clearly observed that Crone, as usual, used this document to raise doubts about Islamic sources, particularly what the Qur'an mentions about the date of the battle of Badr**.** She starts by questioning Islamic narration. It is well known that the battle of Badr is one of the most important battles in Islamic history. It is mentioned in Surat Al-Anfal (The Spoils of War, verse 41) which Crone

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[1] Crone, op. cit., pp. 226-227.

cites wrongly. The Holy Qur'an refers to the holy month of Ramadan as the month of Al-Furqan as in Surat Al-Baqarah (The Cow, verse 185) which is, again, wrongly cited by Crone. She finds it difficult to match the month of Qur'an with the month of Ramadan. She says, " *Qur'an itself does not identify the "day of furqan" as the battle of Badr; and the furqan that was "sent down" in Ramadan scarcely sounds like a reference to a battle.*"[1] Crone uses a papyrus to raise more doubts about the date of the battle as follows:

1. She says, "*There are no fewer than three 'battles' of Badr. The first is a minor episode in which no fighting took place; the second is Badr al-qital or the classical battle; the third does not concern us here.*"[2]

2. "*This 'battle,' alias the raid of Safwan, is one out of two episodes involving Kurz b. Jabir and pasturing camels at Medinah. No Waqid, Adi b. Ka'b, Mughira, or Hakam are mentioned in connection with this episode in any classical source.*"[3]

3. She also adds, "*It is, however, well known that the second or real battle of Badr was preceded by a raid at Nakhla in which Muhammad's men captured a Meccan caravan on its way from Taif. The participants in this raid included Waqid b. Abdallah and Amir b. Rabi'a of B. Adi b. Ka'b on Muhammad's side, and Uthman b. Abdallah b. Al Mughira together with Hakam b. Kaysan on the Meccan side. There can thus be no doubt that the papyrus describes the raid of Nakhla followed by the battle of*

[1] Crone, op. cit., p. 226.
[2] Crone, op. cit., p. 227.
[3] Crone, op. cit., p. 228.

Badr. The two dates given are either the dates of Nakhla and Badr, respectively, or alternative dates for the battle of Badr alone. If the former, we have here a deviant date for the raid at Nakhla and another for the bbattle of Badr. If the latter, we have two deviant dates for Badr."[1]

4. Crone continues, "*The battle of Badr is not supposed to have taken place fourteen or eighteen months from Muharram, but rather twenty-one months from it (Muharram being the first month of the first Muslim year). If we count fourteen and eighteen months from Muharram, we arrive either at Safar and Jumada II or at Rabi' I and Rajab, depending on whether or not we include Muharram itself in the count. We do not arrive at Ramadan.*"[2]

5. "*Let us assume then that Abbott is right: the author counted from the month of the Hijra, that is Rabi' I. Counting fourteen months from Rabi' I does not get us to the right month for the first battle of Badr, still less for the second. But counting eighteen months from Rabi' does get us to Ramadan, the proper month for the second or classical battle of Badr, provided that we omit Rabi' I itself from the count. Waqidi does not, his date being nineteen months from the Hijra.*"[3]

6. "*There is, of course, a problem. The fragment is eight lines long. Within those eight lines the author informs us twice that he is counting from Muharram: one might thus be inclined to believe that he is counting from Muharram. If so, we have an author of the mid-eighth century who was under the impression that a battle or*

[1] Crone, op. cit., pp. 228-229.
[2] Crone, op. cit., p. 227.
[3] Crone, op. cit., pp. 227-228.

battles known by the name of Badr had been fought fourteen and/or eighteen months from Muharram, in other words not in Ramadan."[1]

7. "*The two dates given are either the dates of Nakhla and Badr, respectively, or alternative dates for the battle of Badr alone. If the former, we have here a deviant date for the raid at Nakhla and another for the battle of Badr. If the latter, we have two deviant dates for Badr.*"[2]

8. "*In the tradition as we have it, these dates have disappeared. Why? Presumably because scriptural passages came to be identified as references to the events in question. If Nakhla is referred to in (2:214)[3]; the raid took place in a holy month, not in Safar or Rabi' I. If Badr is referred to in (2:181)[4], the battle took place in Ramadan, not in Jumada II or Rajab. The Quranic allusions would thus seem to have generated the classical dates, causing earlier ones to be lost.*"[5]

9. "*They (dates) were not lost without trace, however: they were dumped on the raid of Safwan. The incident is dated to fourteen or eighteen months from Muharram,…depending on whether Muharram itself is*

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[1] Crone, op. cit., p. 228.

[2] Crone, op. cit., pp. 228-229.

[3] The translation of this verse is, "Or think you that you will enter Paradise while yet there has not come to you the like of (that which came to) those who passed away before you? Affliction and adversity befell them, they were shaken as with earthquake, till the Messenger (of God) and those who believed along with him said: when will God's help come? Now surely God's help is near." Nothing in this verse refers to what Crone says. This is associated with another battle, 'Al-Khandaq'

[4] See the footnote on page 79.

[5] Crone, op. cit., p. 229.

included in the count. The raid of Safwan thus carries not only the name of the battle of Badr, but also its pre-classical dates. Safwan, in short, is where the non-Quranic dates for Badr (or Badr and Nakhla) were unloaded." [1]

10. "*That there was no continuous transmission is a fundamental point which I should like to corroborate with references to the date of the battle of Badr. The history of this date illustrates the role played by the Qur'an in the formation of the tradition at the expense of recollection. The agents may or may not have been storytellers in this particular case, but either way the moral is the same: as new information was created, earlier information was lost.*"[2]

11. Crone concludes by saying, "*Yet if it had not been for this papyrus, we would never have known. The tradition as we have it displays not the slightest hesitation over the date of the battle of Badr, and the complete unanimity clearly suggests that Badr had always been remembered as a battle fought in Ramadan. In fact, it was not remembered as such at all. The month was supplied by the Qur'an at the cost of recollection…. Unanimity in this case does not testify to continuous transmission, but on the contrary to the accumulated loss of information."*[3] Then she claims, *"Without correctives from outside the Islamic tradition, such as papyri, archaeological evidence, and*

[1] Crone, op. cit., p. 229.
[2] Crone, op. cit., p. 226.
[3] Crone, op. cit., pp. 229-230.

non-Muslim sources, we have little hope of reconstituting the original shapes of this early period."[1]

Crone, while discussing this issue, commits clear historical blunders. Before refuting what she says, I will introduce what ancient Islamic sources say about the battle of Badr.I will also discuss the text of the papyrus that Crone uses to question the established and well-documented information in the Islamic sources about the battle of Badr.Above all, I will also refer to the Holy Qur'an and its allusions. The following discussion makes things clear.

1. Ibn Ishaq mentions, "No more than ten nights did the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) stay in Madinah after coming back from *Al-'Asheerah* raid. Within this time, Kurz Ibn Jaber Al-Fihri attacked the cattle of the people of Madinah. The Prophet (pbuh) got out searching for him. He reached a valley called Safwan on the side of Badr. He missed Kurz Ibn Jaber. This was the first battle of Badr. Then, the Prophet returned to Madinah and stayed there the remaining of Jumada II, Rajab and Sha'ban."[2]

Regarding the second battle of Badr or Abdullah Ibn Jahsh incursion, or the Nakhla battle, Ibn Hisham says, "The messenger of Allah (pbuh) sent Abdullah Ibn Jahsh Ibn Ri'ab Al-Asadi in Rajab, and sent eight Muslim migrants along with him (who migrated from Makkah to Madinah) with no *ansari* (from Madinah) among them. He wrote him a letter and asked him to read it only two days

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[1] Crone, op. cit., p. 230.

[2] Ibn Hisham, Part 1, p. 601; Ibn Habeeb, Al-Mahbar, p. 111; Al-Tabari, Part 1, p. 407; Al-Waqidi, Al-Maghazi, Part 1, p. 12; Al-Maqdisi, Al-Mutahhar IbnTaher, the beginning and the date, Paris, 1907, Part 4, p. 182.

after their departure from Madinah. After reading it he had to follow the instructions without forcing anyone of his companions to do the same."[1]

Then, Ibn Hisham mentioned the names of the eight immigrants and said, "After two days of his departure from Madinah, Abdullah Ibn Jahsh opened the letter and read the following: "As soon as you read this letter, go ahead till you reach Nakhla - between Makkah and Taif - and monitor news about the Quraysh." After reading it he said: hearing and obedience is due to the Prophet's order. He said to his companions, "The Prophet (pbuh) ordered me to continue till I reach Nakhla where I should monitor news about Quraysh and report back to him. He told me not to force any one of you. "He went on along with all his companions. None of them refused the Prophet's instructions.

"Abdullah Ibn Jahsh went through Hejaz route till he reached a place above Al-fura' called Bahran.In that place, a camel for Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqas and Otbah Ibn Ghazwan went astray and both went tracking it. As a result, they left the group. Abdullah Ibn Jahsh went on along with his companions till he reached Nakhla where Quraysh caravan passed by. The caravan was carrying raisins, and some goods from Quraysh. Amr Ibn Al-Hadhrami, Othman Ibn Abdullah Ibn Al-Mughirah and his brother Nawfal Ibn

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[1] See footnote No. 144 below; Abdullah Ibn Jahsh Al-Asadi, an ally of bani Shams, one of the early converts to Islam, migrated to Abyssinia and participated in the Battle of Badr. He was the first army leader in Islam when he was sent to Nakhla, martyred in the Battle of Uhud. See Ibn Hajar, Shihab-addin Abalfadhl Ibn Ali (773/852H), ***Al-'Isabah fi Tamieez Al-Sahabah, and in its margin 'Al-'Istiaab fi ma'rifat Al-Ashab***, Part 2, Cairo, 1328 H, pp. 187-286, Ibn Sa'ad, ***Al-Tabaqat Al-Kubra***, Part 2, Beirut, 1957, p. 10.

Abdullah, both from bani Makhzoom, and Al-Hakam Ibn Kaysan, servant of Hisham Ibn Al-Mughirah were among the Quraysh in that caravan.

When the Qurashi people saw Abdullah Ibn Jahsh and his group they felt afraid. The Muslim group discussed the matter and unanimously decided to kill whoever they could and take the things they had. Raja Ibn Waqid Ibn Abdullah and Al-Hakam Ibn Kaysan were killed. Nawfal Ibn Abdullah escaped and they failed to catch or kill him. When Abdullah Ibn Jahsh and his group reached Madinah, the prophet (pbuh) blamed them and said "I did not instruct you to fight during the holy month". He endowed the camel and the two captives and refused to take anything they brought. They felt sad. All Muslims rebuked the group.

The Jews of Madinah exploited the situation. They said that Amr Ibn Al Hadhrami was killed by Waqid Ibn Abdullah. Amr signified that war was established, Al-Hadhrami signified war has come, and Waqid Ibn Abdullah's name indicated that war was ignited. "Almighty Allah made this episode an advantage for the Muslims rather than a disadvantage when the following verse of Surat Al-Baqarah (2:217) was revealed: "They ask you concerning fighting in the sacred months.Say "Fighting there in is a great (transgression) but a greater (transgression) with Allah is to prevent mankind from following the way of Allah, to disbelieve in Him, to prevent

access to Al-Masjid Al-Haram (at Makkah), and to drive out its inhabitants."[1]

After these events, the great battle of Badr took place. It is commonly known as the third Battle of Badr. Ibn Hisham says "The Prophet (pbuh) heard about the return of Abu Sufyan Ibn Harb from the Levant with great commercial caravan for Quraysh with thirty or forty men. The Prophet enticed Muslims and said "This is the commercial caravan of Quraysh with their money. Get out to them. Perhaps Allah makes it spoils for you." Ibn Ishaq said, "The Prophet (pbuh) and his companions left Madinah after some nights of Ramadan had elapsed…" Ibn Hisham said, "He left Madinah after eight nights of Ramadan had elapsed…and the battle of Badr took place on Friday morning, seventeenth of Ramadan."[2]

2. The text recorded in the papyrus is translated as follows:

i. …[ ].[ ]-[ ].[ ] *the Arabic letters*: seen, waw, 'ein(س،و،ع)

ii. [w]aqid bin 'a[bda]ll[ah wa] Messenger [Allah

iii. From [a]ltak[-]aw[ ]-tree[[3]

1 Ibn Hisham, ***Al-Seerah***, Part 1, pp. 601-603. See also Al-Tabari, ***Tareekh***, Part 2, p. 110 and the following pages; Al-Waqidi, Al-Maghazi, Part 1, p. 19.

2 Ibn Hisham, ***Al-Seerah***, Part 1, pp. 606-607, pp. 612-636; Al-Tabari, ***Tareekh***, Part 2, pp. 409-415.

3 Perhaps in the second word after the preposition "from" that consist of the letters [a]ltaq[-], the letter "kaaf" is wrong and can be corrected by replacing it with the letter "yaa'" with hamzah, therefore the missing letter at the end could be "faa'" and the whole word is probably "Al-Taif", and it is well-known that Nakhla is between Makkah and Taif.

iv. From the family of Adi bin K[a'b]- from the family of [

v. LMughirah and Hakam bin S[ ].[La]… [wad . [1] [ ]d[ ]d

vi. Fourteen months from [the month] Muha[rram Al[kareem got [out] to Badr wa ha[

vii. Muhammad to Badr and they met in Badr *dazdaab 'Al* [i]eight[ ][een] months from Muharram Al-Kareem

viii. Muhammad from Makkah and Quraysh sleep [ ] [and] from Makkah one thousand men Qanba and Majid bin.[1]

It is clear that this papyrus is greatly deformed. Only three Arabic letters appear in the first line. It is impossible for a specialist to confirm that the original papyrus was only this piece. It is without an introduction. In addition, the line numbered (i) is not necessarily the first line in the original papyrus. This is probably the case, especially because the document has no introduction, and there is no clue that can lead us to know its original size. This numbering style is approved by papyri specialists when they are published to facilitate making comments on the content. The content of the papyrus is written in a different handwriting. Six lines of this document sound like incomplete personal letter.

[1] See the copy of the papyrus obtained from Grohmann, A, Arabic Papyri, Hirbet El-Mird, Louvain, 1963, Nov. 1, pp. 82-84. Also see, Al-Roubi, Amaal Mohammad, "The great battle of Badr with reference to a papyrus", proceedings of the annual meeting of History and Archeology Association, Gulf Cooperation Council Countries, Issue 5.

3. None of the lines in this papyrus is complete or at least partially complete. It is full of gaps. The person who published it says: "It is torn and damaged on its left side and at its end." In addition, its discourse is intermittent. Its writer seemed to have written it in a very reduced form. This form of writing was common in the writings of some papyri recorded in Greek. It is well known that Greek was the official language in Egypt, Syria, and Palestine. It remained dominant nearly half a century after the Arab Conquest. Then it was replaced by Arabic, the language of the Holy Qur'an in the beginning of the eighth century which was nearly the period in which the above papyrus was written.

4. Crone says that the papyrus starts mentioning four names. However, the fact is that, above the names there is an incomplete line with only three Arabic letters left at the end. Moreover, the writer of the papyrus mentioned the great battle of Badr in the last line .He only mentioned a few words: "Muhammad from Makkah and Quraysh from Makkah and one thousand men, and a person called Majid." Here is the end of the papyrus, or rather the part that has reached us.

5. Based on the above discussion and the papyrus, we can conclude the following: Crone confuses the three battles of Badr. She says, *"There are no fewer than three 'battles' of Badr. The first is a minor episode in which no fighting took place; the second is Badr Al-qital or the classical battle; the third does not concern us here.*" This is the reversed chronological order of what Ibn Hisham mentioned about the three battles. According to the well-known chronological order, fighting took place in the third battle, not in the second. Even if we overlook this

confusion and consider it inadvertence, which should not have happened, a question is raised: on what grounds does she deny the existence of such a historic event? Did Crone do that because no fighting took place? Even this reason does not give her this right as long as the original sources contain a certain description of what happened.

6. What is meant by the classical sources when she says, "*No Waqid, Adi b. Ka'b, Mughira, or Hakam are mentioned in connection with this episode in any classical source.*"? Most probably she means Islamic sources. However, the opposite is true. Islamic sources pointed to them only in the context where they had a role, i.e., in the second battle of Badr (the Nakhla battle). This argument illustrates the wide gap between what Crone says and what really happened. For instance, Ibn Hisham mentioned these names in the text above.

7. Crone argues that, "The two dates given (in the papyrus)are either the dates of Nakhla and Badr, respectively, or alternative dates for the battle of Badr alone. If the former, we have here a deviant date for the raid at Nakhla and another for the battle of Badr. If the latter, we have two deviant dates for Badr."

What Crone mentions is unequivocally incorrect. The truth is totally different. The first date in the papyrus corresponds with the chronological order mentioned in the Islamic sources with regard to the first battle of Badr which took place in Jumada II, in the second year of Hijrah, if the month of Muharram is not counted. This is the battle which Crone wants to cancel. Probably, this was the battle the writer of the papyrus was talking about in the

missing part of the first line of which only three letters were left.

The second date, namely the eighteen months after Hijrah corresponds with the second battle of Badr or the Nakhla battle which took place on the last day of Rajab, if Muharram is not counted. That the writer of the papyrus mentioned the month of Muharram does not entail that this month is included in counting. These dates are exactly the ones mentioned by Muslim historians as explained above. This corroborates their accuracy. Therefore, the two dates mentioned in the papyrus refer to the date of the first battle of Badr (the Safwan battle) and the date of the second battle of Badr (the Nakhla battle).

The date of the great battle of Badr remains unmentioned in this papyrus, but its occurrence is a fact as mentioned in the Holy Qur'an. The writer of the papyrus did not complete his description of it. He just mentioned the name of Muhammad, Makkah, the Quraysh, one thousand men, and Majid. This is the end of what we know about this papyrus. The incomplete personal letter on the back of the original papyrus supports the view that the description of the battle had some missing information.

8. The great battle of Badr on the seventeenth of Ramadan according to Islamic sources took place after the raid of Nakhla. Moreover, the Holy Qur'an which was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) "Who never speaks of his own desire" points out this battle.

9. In view of the above arguments, we conclude that the long discussions provided by Crone are based on historical gross errors. The evidence is the confusion of historical events and replacing one battle by another to

infer the date that can help in achieving the ultimate goal of questioning the date of the battle mentioned in the Holy Qur'an. Her arguments are based on a torn and damaged papyrus of eight lines, the first line consists of only three separate letters; the left half of the next three lines is missing; almost one fourth of the fifth line is lost; and three lines are full of lacunas. Even the last line which is the best of all contains lacunas and one word which is not clear. In spite of all this, the papyrus did not achieve its desired objective.

10. Grohmann, the publisher of the papyrus and one of the most well-known specialists in Islamic studies, and other specialists had agreed about the dates as mentioned by Muslim writers. Crone herself points this out on page 227, footnote number 101 in her book.

11. In fact, questioning the historical sources is one of the most important features of historical investigation to arrive at the truth. However, it is misused here. Crone mixes up the historical events intentionally, though she is very famous for her accuracy. She exploits the ease of convincing western readers with her writings because of their lack of, or at best marginal, knowledge about Islamic history. She makes them oscillate between doubt and certainty. A few examples will suffice to illustrate my argument. Once she tells the reader that, "*The battle of Badr is one of the few unshakable facts in the history of Islam*"[1] and later mentions that " *Qur'an itself does not identify the "day of furqan*" as the battle of Badr; and the *furqan* that was "*sent down" in Ramadan scarcely*

[1] Crone, op. cit., p. 226.

sounds like a reference to a battle."[1] Crone says about Qur'an, "*The Qur'an is generally, though not invariably, regarded as a contemporary source, or in other words as the preaching of Muhammad himself. Whether or not this is correct, the Quran does not offer much historical information...*"[2]

Therefore, we should apply the same methodology she tries to follow with regard to Muslim historians on her arguments. In other words, we have to reject her distorted information which diverts the direction of historical events completely. Her fanatical views should also be brought down because a serious history researcher should be absolutely unbiased.

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[1] Crone, op. cit., p. 226.
[2] Crone, op. cit., p. 203.

The Sixth Theme

Formation of the Islamic State

This chapter presents many key points raised by Crone. They will be discussed one by one so that it becomes easy for the reader to follow.

Islam resisted by the Quraysh infidels in Makkah, but succeeded in Yathreb

In the beginning of her discussion of this topic Crone inquires about the role played by Quraysh in serving Ka'ba. She says, " *Quraysh do not seem to have performed any of the services expected of pre-Islamic guardians.*"[1] *But if Quraysh saw themselves as guardians on behalf of Abraham's God, all while acknowledging the existence of other deities, their reaction to Muhammad becomes exceedingly hard to understand.*"[2] Then she asks about the reason why, "*it was in Medina rather than in Mecca that Muhammad's message was accepted.*"

Her judgment about the Prophet is that, "*In Mecca, Muhammad was only a would-be prophet, and if he had stayed in Mecca, that is what he would have remained. This makes sense, given the general absence of evidence for a crisis in Mecca….*"[3] Then she asks a strange question:"*how different would Mohammad's preaching have been, one wonders, if he had begun his career in Medina, or for that matter elsewhere?*"[4] She concludes her

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[1] Crone, op. cit., pp. 186-187.
[2] Crone, op. cit., pp. 190-191.
[3] Crone, op. cit., p. 235.
[4] Crone, op. cit., p. 232.

allegations against Islam and the Prophet of Islam by saying that, "*Muhammad's success evidently had something to do with the fact that he preached both state formation and conquest…*"[1]

1. To respond to Crone's arguments, the first thing I draw the readers' attention to is that this orientalist recognizes what she had rejected before, i.e., the existence of the holy place in Makkah, the rituals associated with it, and Quraysh's connection with Makkah since Qussai's time, the great-grandfather of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). However, she is doing her best to introduce a dim image of Quraysh and its administration of Makkah before Islam. She believes that Quraysh did not do any kind of work which was supposed to be done by such people who have special connection with this place. She confines their role to excavation works without giving details about their types. She does not explain that excavation works were performed by Quraysh to dig water wells to serve the pilgrims who came for Hajj to visit the holy place.

She also mentions the provision of food by Quraysh without mentioning to whom it was provided. The food was served to the pilgrims. She also overlooks the type of clothes worn by the Pilgrims while performing Hajj rituals. She does not mention the policy followed by Qussai after he became the ruler of Makkah which was mentioned by Ibn Ishaq: "He approved the way of life of the Arabs, and believed that was a religion by itself and should not be changed. He approved the position of Al

[1] Crone, op. cit., p. 243.

Safwan, 'Adwan, Nas'ah, and Murrah Ibn 'Awf as they were. Qussai was the first son of Ka'b Ibn Lu'ai to have such dominion over and obedience by his own people. He was responsible for providing drinking water to the Pilgrims, maintenance of *Al-Bait Al-Haram* (The Holy House), presiding the meetings of Quraysh people, and carrying the flag during wars. Therefore, he obtained all the honor of Makkah." Qussai followed a very wise policy when he retained some responsibilities in the hands of some tribes to avoid their rebel against him while ruling Makkah. The positions that he retained for himself were difficult to be taken except by those who are able to spend on them. Such responsibilities required much expenditure to serve the pilgrims as well as organizing and monitoring the collective work in the society to tighten the grip on the whole of Makkah. Therefore, he obtained all the honor of Makkah."[1]

2. The reason why the polytheists of Quraysh resisted the message of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was that the society of Makkah was wealthy and ruled by the rich. Many of those rich people felt envious because they thought one of them should have received the message of God and not Muhammad. Abu Jahl said, "Banu Abdo Manaf and we competed for honor. They fed the needy and travelers and we did so; they offered help to wayfarers and we did the same; they were generous and we were so, till we became on equal footing like racing horses, they said we have a prophet supported by divine revelations. When can we achieve the same privilege? We swear by

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[1] See Ibn Hisham. ***As-Seerah***, Part 1, pp. 124-125; Al-Tabari, Part 1, pp. 258-259.

Allah, we will never believe in Muhammad or in what he says."[1]

Al-Waleed Ibn Al-Mugheerah expressed the same feelings of hatred when he said, "How come Mohammad, not me, receives revelation from heaven, though I am the first person in Quraysh? And how come Abu Mas'ood Ibn Amr Ibn Omair Al-Thaqafi, the master of Thaqeef, is not chosen for the message and we both are the greatest characters in the two villages?" Qur'an says about these two persons, "And they say: "Why is not this Qur'an sent down to some great man of the two towns (Makkah and Taif")?" (Surat Az-Zukhruf, verse 31).

Islam prohibited their belief in the pagan idols which prevailed over their life and was even confused with the beliefs of Ibrahim (pbuh). Islam also prohibited the evil deeds that were practiced by their wealthy people like drinking alcohol, gambling, adultery, and usury. On top of all that, Islam considered all humans equal, regardless their color, gender, or wealth. The only criterion to distinguish between people, according to Islam, is righteousness.

The Qurashi non-believers felt upset when their slaves embraced Islam in great numbers. They felt they started losing a very important source of their wealth. Therefore, their resistance to the new message of Islam and to the Prophet was so violent and aggressive. This is not a very strange reaction. The Jews did the same with

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[1] Ibn Hisham, ***As-Seerah*** , Part 1, p. 262; and to read about the great number of converts to Islam in Makkah, see Ibn Hisham, Part 1, pp. 374, 332, 330, 262, 245, 237, 428-454, and the following pages.

Jesus Christ (pbuh) when he invited people to Christianity, though he was one of them. They conspired with the Roman pagans against him; though they were his people and people with a revealed book, they used all possible means to fight him.

3. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) did not claim to be a prophet out of his own desire. He was the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of all Prophets and glad tidings of him were given in Torah and the Bible. The Christian and Jewish priests know the Prophet Mohammad just as they know their children, even if they claim the opposite. What Crone said about the Prophet Muhammad makes her assume the position of an enemy rather than a historian.

4. Crone ignored the mention of the great number of people who embraced Islam in Makkah. Although the non-believers used all possible means to prevent them from following Islam, they failed miserably. Ibn Ishaq mentioned, "Then people embraced Islam in great numbers: men and women. Islam spread in Makkah, and became the talk of the town." This was the early phase of Islam in Makkah which was called the stage of undeclared Da'wa.[1] The people of Madinah were prepared to accept the message of Islam because the Jews lived among them.

During conflicts between Aws community and Khazraj community, the Jews used to say to them, "A time is approaching in which a prophet will be sent and you will be killed along with him the way 'Aad and Iram were killed." Ibn Ishaq narrated that Abdullah Ibn Salam, a great Jewish rabbi before converting to Islam said, "When

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[1] Ibn Hisham, ***As-Seerah***, Part 1, p. 121.

I heard about Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), I knew his features, his name, and his time that we were expecting. I did not disclose this information; I kept silent till he came to Madinah. When the Prophet reached Qubaa' at bani Amr Ibn Awf, a man came and declared his arrival. I was at the top of a palm tree and my aunt Khalidah Bint Al-Hareth was sitting below me. When I heard the news, I shouted 'God is the greatest'. When she heard me, my aunt said, 'Get disappointed! Had you heard about the coming of Moses Ibn Imran, you wouldn't have added any more words.' I said to her, 'Oh my aunt, by Allah, he is the brother of Moses Ibn Imran and preaches the same religion.' She said, 'Oh my nephew! Is he the prophet we used to be told he will appear prior to the Day of Judgment?' I said, 'Yes'. She said, 'Oh I see.' Then I went to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and declared my conversion to Islam.[1]

In addition, the Prophet had some relatives in Madinah. His mother was Aminah Bint Wahb of bani Zuhrah tribe, which means that he was not a stranger there.

5. It is a well-known fact that all divine messages were confronted by fierce opposition in their early stages because changing faith is not an easy task. It means replacing the intellectual heritage by a new one. The more materialistic privileges you lose, the more aggressive becomes the resistance to the new faith. Divine religions consider all humans equal. All divine religions confronted

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[1] Ibn Hisham Part 1, p. 517. To read more about recognizing Prophet Muhammad by a great number of Jews with the help of the description in their Scriptures, see the same reference, pp. 428-518.

strong opposition: Noah, Ibrahim, Saleh, and Hood (peace be upon them all) were belied by their people; Moses' people belied Jesus Christ and conspired against him. Why, then, do we have to consider Muhammad's people in Makkah an exception? Their resistance to the Prophet was normal and expected.

6. It is not clear what Crone means by saying:"*the general absence of evidence for a crisis in Mecca.*" The essential problem for her is Islam and its rise in Makkah and its revelation to Muhammad the Seal of all Prophets. There is no absence of evidences about any of the aspects of the Prophet Muhammad's life or the message of Islam, whether in its early or late stages. The sources have recorded all the minute details about Islam and the Prophet, contrary to all the previous religions; many of their traditions and much of the details about their Prophets (peace be upon them all) were lost.

The following is only one evidence associated with the closest religion (in time) to Islam, namely Christianity. Jesus Christ (pbuh) was born in Bethlehem in Palestine in the first year A.D. He spent many years of his childhood in Egypt. He started preaching about Christianity in Palestine when he was a youth. His people, the Jews, became very angry with him. They conspired against him with the help of the Roman Empire which was ruling Palestine at that time. Rome fought against Christianity although interference in the religion of the people under its ruling was not a part of its ethics. The main reason behind the declaration of war by the Romans against Christians was a belief that the Jews who embraced Christianity conspired against the Roman Empire and they practiced

their rituals secretly. In fact, they did so out of fear from their Jewish people. Later, when Rome discovered that the Jews were gradually trying to obtain independence in Palestine, the relationship between both parties deteriorated and resulted in the destruction of the Jews' Temple in 69/70 A.D.

It took Rome a long time to realize that the Christians are followers of a new religion which was not the same as Moses'. The Roman emperors insisted that the rites of worship should be offered by all to the emperors. Consequently, the Christians were occasionally persecuted and chased. The situation got worse when a person was tortured and killed if caught with any Christian writings from the Bible with him or in his house. The condition remained like this until the edict of Milan was issued by the emperor Constantine I in 313 A.D. This edict granted Christianity the right to live like any other religion. In 379 A.D., Christianity became the official religion of the Byzantine Empire. Due to all this, a lot of details about the life of Jesus Christ were missing and the dispute over the recognized and the unrecognized Bibles occurred. These Bibles were collected long time (more than three centuries) after the Roman persecution of Christianity.[1]

Allah Almighty wants the minute details of Prophet Muhammad's life in Makkah and Madinah to be preserved. Authors and historians recorded his biography since the early stage of Islam. The Holy Qur'an as well contributed to the preservation of the details of the

[1] ***Bernaba Bible*** is one of the unrecognized scriptures, and Prophet Muhammad is named in it as Ahmad.

Prophet's life and Crone reluctantly admits the fact that not even a single word in the Qur'an has changed.[1]

7. The query made by Crone about the difference that would have taken place if Muhammad (pbuh) commenced his message in Madinah or in any other place is not scientifically proper. The general principle in historical research is that the researcher analyzes the events that actually happened, not hypothetical ones. This is taken for granted by historians. We do not need to emphasize that such imaginary hypotheses lead historians to a series of wrong speculations. To illustrate such imaginary hypotheses, one might say, if Hitler were not born, the Second World War would not have happened, and the Jews would not have suffered miserably, and there would not have been fifty million victims, etc.

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[1] Crone, op. cit., p. 203.

II. Spiritual Crisis in Pre-Islamic Arabia

Crone says, "*As for the spiritual crisis, there does not appear to have been any such thing in sixth-century Arabia.*"[1] She also argues that, "*Pre-Islamic (or for that matter pre-modern) Arabia was strikingly poor in mythology, ceremonial, ritual, and festivals. Religious life was reduced to periodic visits to holy places, stones, and trees, to sacrifice and consultation of diviners; …and these practices were not closely associated with belief in specific gods. The great annual pilgrimage was apparently not conducted in the name of any one deity, and the remaining practices could effortlessly be switched from one deity to another; all survived into modern times, among Muslim and Christian tribesmen alike. …though in practice the holy men active in Arabia were in no position to ensure that conversion amounted to more than two little words.*"[2] She ends her argument by saying, "*Indeed, in behavioral terms, the better part of Arabia was still pagan in the nineteenth century.*"[3]

The following observations are made about the above claims:

1. Contrary to what Crone says, historical records state that there was a spiritual crisis in Arabia. The evidence is that some sources mention a number of Arabs who renounced their fathers' religion before the rise of Islam, such as Abdul Mutalib Ibn Hashim Ibn Abd Manaf, Shaibah Ibn Rabee'ah who used to worship in Hiraa cave,

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[1] Crone, op. cit., p. 236.
[2] Crone, op. cit., p. 240.
[3] Crone, op. cit., p. 241.

Waraqah Ibn Nawfal Ibn Asad Ibn Abdul 'Ozza, Abu Omayah Ibn Al Mugheerah and Al Hareth Ibn Obaid of Makhzoom tribe, Zaid Ibn Amr Ibn Nufail Ibn Abdul 'Ozza Al-'Adawi who used to worship in Hiraa cave and did not eat what was sacrificed to idols, 'Amer Ibn Huthaim Al-Jahmi, Abdullah b. Jad'aan Al-Tameemi, Maqees Ibn Qays Ibn Oday Al-Sahmi, Othman Ibn Affan Ibn Abil-'Aas Ibn Omayyah, Al-Waleed Ibn Al-Mugheerah Ibn Abdullah Ibn Omar Ibn Makhzoom and his son Hashem.[1]

Most of these people believed in the religion of Ibrahim (pbuh). Qur'an in Surat Al-Baqarah, verse 135, and Surat Al-'Imran, verse 67, describe the believers in this religion as non-Jews and non-Christians. They were described as monotheists. These believers were the glad tidings who deeply expressed the religious, social and political needs of their own society. Islam came to satisfy all these needs. The poetry of Omayyah Ibn Abi Assalt about the Day of Judgment, heaven, and hell eloquently represented the suffering of these people until the arrival of Islam. The practices of the monks, Othman Ibn Math'oon, Wakee' Ibn Salamah Al-Eyady, and others were a declaration of a tendency towards the new religion which was felt to be imminent in Arabia.[2]

2. Claiming that pagan ritual practices survived into modern times among Muslim and Christian tribesmen is

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[1]. Ibn Habeeb, Al-Munammaq, pp. 531-532.

[2] To read about Al-Hunafa' (believers in the religion of Ibrahim), peace be upon him, see Ibn Hisham, ***As-Seerah***, Part 1, p. 222 and the next pages; and about the poetry of Omayyah Ibn As-Salt, see Ibn Hisham, Part 1, pp. 227-228; Bin Habeeb, Al-Mahbar, p. 136.

not true. Christianity does not exist in Arabia now. Moreover, Crone does not specifically explain what she means by pagan rituals that survived into modern times. However, she implicitly refers to Hajj (Pilgrimage). To refute her argument it can be said that pilgrimage rites before Islam were remnants of Ibrahim's religion in Makkah. Pilgrimage is one of the basic pillars of Islam. Regarding visiting Al-Quds in Palestine by both Christians and Muslims, it is not a pagan ritual at all. It is rather a form of respect to Jesus Christ (pbuh). Discussing this issue does not fall within the scope of the present study.

3. Where in Arabia are the missionary activities Crone is talking about? Islam is the predominant religion there with the exception of sporadic pockets in Yemen where a few hundreds of Jews live. Crone talks about missionary activities without referring to any source to verify this piece of information.

4. Crone claims, "*the better part of Arabia was still pagan in the nineteenth century*." This is patently untrue and reveals utter ignorance about the facts of modern history. She does not mention the source she consulted to validate her claim because no such source exists. Paganism has no trace in all Arabia. Therefore, it is just a claim similar to the previous ones without evidence. Most probably, Crone seems to believe or wants to give the impression that Islam is a pagan religion.

5. That Arabia was poor in mythology is an advantage. However, Crone avoids mentioning the reason behind this phenomenon because this would have lead her to endorse the fact that the Arabian Peninsula was a cradle for many divine messages and many Prophets lived there since the time of Ibrahim (pbuh), then Hud and Saleh

(peace be upon them all); since Ibrahim and Ismail raised the pillars of Ka'ba.

In addition, Arabs used to visit Makkah for the Pilgrimage and they knew that Allah is the creator of the heavens and the earth. In the course of time they integrated pagan carvings into divine messages. However, they preserved some concepts of these divine messages like the belief in the existence of Allah, the Creator. Therefore, forms of mythology like the Greek one about the story of creation or like the Jewish one which they developed as a result of the diasporas did not exist. The Jews developed various forms of mythology because of their constant roaming from society to society and from one continent to another throughout their history. They acquired the beliefs and cultures of the people among whom they lived such as those of Iraqis, Babylonians, Assyrians, Egyptians, and Persians.

III-Islamic State and Invasion

Crone enquires about the reason behind the failure of Arabs to support Makkah during its conflict against Prophet Muhammad. She discloses her attitude by saying, "*…why did the Arabs fail to come to Mecca's assistance during its protracted struggle against Muhammad? Had they done so, Muhammad's statelet in Medina could have been nipped in the bud.*"[1] In her explanation to how Islam succeeded she says, "*Muhammad's success evidently had something to do with the fact that he preached both state formation and conquest.*"[2] She elaborates on her opinion by saying, "*The fit between Muhammad's message and tribal interests is, in fact, so close that there is a case for the view that his programme might have succeeded at any point in Arabian history. The potential for an Arab state formation and conquest had long been there, and once Muhammad had had the idea of putting monotheism to political use, it was exploited time and again, if never on the same pan-Arabian scale.*

Had earlier adherents of Din Ibrahim seen the political implications of their own beliefs, might they not similarly have united Arabia for conquest? If Muhammad had not done so, can it be argued that a later prophet might well have taken his role? The conquests, it could be argued, turn on the simple fact that somebody had an idea, and it is largely or wholly accidental that somebody did so in the seventh century rather than the fifth, the tenth, or

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[1] Crone, op. cit., p. 243.
[2] Ibid.

not at all."[1] And to justify what is mentioned she believes, "*Islam originated as a nationalist movement, or in other words as a primitive reaction to alien domination of the same type as those which the Arab conquerors were themselves to provoke in North Africa and Iran, and which European colonists were later to provoke throughout the Third World. If we accept the testimony of the non-Muslim sources on the nature of Muhammad's teaching, this interpretation fits extremely well.*"[2]

To refute what Crone claims, it can be said,

1. The reason why Arab tribes did not assist Quraysh in its conflict, not struggle, with Prophet Muhammad was that this conflict was considered an internal affair within Quraysh. According to the established Arabic traditions and customs, no third party is allowed to interfere unless requested. Quraysh did not ask any tribe to help. And when Crone says, "*Had they assisted Quraysh, they would have nipped Muhammad's statelet in its bud in Madinah.*" This does not need any comment because historical criticism is not built on conditional "if" about events which did not exist at all or merely hypothetical. However, saying so reveals with no doubt the true feelings Crone harbours against Islam.

2. The argument of Crone that the reason behind the success of the message of Islam lies in the concept of state formation and conquest is absolutely incorrect for many reasons:

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[1] Crone, op. cit., p. 245.
[2] Crone, op. cit., p. 247.

a) Although Quraysh violently opposed Prophet Muhammad in Makkah, his message succeeded greatly. As Ibn Hisham mentions, "Indeed, Islam spread in Makkah and among Quraysh people"[1], before the Prophet got permission from Allah to commence fighting.

b) Since the first divine revelation to Prophet Muhammad until Al-'Aqabah's second allegiance, he kept on inviting people to Islam, and was instructed by Allah to endure the persecution of non-believers and to forgive the ignorant. However, when the persecution got more and more severe, the Prophet allowed his companions to migrate to Abyssinia, then to Madinah and finally they were given permission to fight.

c) The Prophet's policy in his confrontations with Quraysh until the great battle of Badr focused on targeting the commercial caravans of Quraysh and its allies heading towards the Levant in reply to the looting of the companions' properties by Quraysh after their migration to Madinah. This policy followed by the Prophet reveals his deep knowledge about the details of these commercial caravans because of his commercial background. Therefore, he sent spies to collect information and watch the movements of the caravans. Muslims started attacking the caravans and capturing the merchants as happened in the Waddan or Abwaa' incursion, the Obaidah Ibn Al-Hareth incursion to *Thaniat Al-Marwah*, 15 Kilo meters east of Badr on the route of the Levant caravans, the Hamzah Ibn Abdul Mutaleb incursion to the sea coast, the Bowat incursion, Al-'Ashherah incursion to Yanbo', the Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqas incursion to Kharrar valley, and the

[1] Ibn Hisham, ***As-Seerah***, Part 1, p. 428-454.

Abdullah Ibn Jahsh incursion to Nakhla. When the Quraysh tried to change the route of its caravan to the Levant via Iraq to avoid attacks by the Muslims, the Prophet sent another caravan lead by Zaid Ibn Harithah and he attacked the caravan lead by Abu Sufyan in *Qirdah*, in Najd. This policy was fruitful. Quraysh suffered and complained because the capital of its business was running out. As a consequence, Quraysh waged the first military war against Muslims in the great battle of Badr.

d) The Prophet did not raid Quraysh in any of the three main battles: Badr, Uhud, or Al-Khandaq. He was, rather, defending the Islamic message and Muslims who were persecuted, driven out from their homes, and robbed by the Qurashi non-believers. That is why they were instructed by the Prophet to intercept Quraysh caravans coming from the Levant. As a consequence, the battle of Badr broke out. The battle of Uhud, lead by Abu Sufyan, was inspired by the desire of Quraysh to revenge itself on Muslims who defeated them in Badr. The same desire resulted in the Battle of Al-Khandaq. Therefore, in three battles the Prophet's position was to defend Madinah from being conquered by the non-believers.[1]

3. Crone says, "*Islam originated as a nativist movement, or in other words as a primitive reaction to alien domination … If we accept the testimony of the non-Muslim sources on the nature of Muhammad's teaching,*

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[1] To read more about the incursions, see Ibn Hisham, ***As-Seerah***, Part 2, pp. 608-609; Babawy, Nabeel Looqa, ***The Spread of Islam by Sword a Fact or a Lie***, 2nd Edition, Cairo, 2002, p. 46. The author is an Egyptian Christian and his writings are neutral.

this interpretation fits extremely well." In this quotation, Crone politically interprets the rise of Islam. In other words, she wants to say that without the alien ambitions of Persia, Byzantine, Abyssinia, Islam would not have risen.

This interpretation reveals that she denies the divine nature of Islam and its ultimate goal of guiding humanity to the eternal truth. Moreover, she introduces a contemporary interpretation of Islam. We may also enquire about the non-Muslim sources she claims they interpret Islam as a nationalist movement. She does not mention or refer to them because no such sources exist. She just plays with words and confuses the historical ages. There is a big difference with those in Iran. Crone pointed out that they claimed to be prophets, the movement that appeared in New Zealand in 1860, and the divine messages. Similar non-divine movements will definitely end in failure. Qur'an says, "Then, as for the foam, it passes away as scum upon the banks, while, as for that which is of use to people, it remains in the earth. Thus God coins the similitude." (The Thunder, verse 17).

Crone's claim that Arabic conquests would not have taken place if the nationalistic movement had not risen is a matter of confusing the seventh and twentieth century events. Such confusion is unacceptable neither from the point of view of historical research nor logically. There was no such concept of Arabic nationalism in the seventh century. This idea has risen recently. The political and material prosperity in all spheres stemmed from the very strong faith that existed in the hearts of the believers in Islam. Moreover, Islam crossed the borders of tribal affiliation, but never destroyed it. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was able to establish the foundation of a building in

which the tribes lived without a sense of grievance or resentment.

4. As it has been said, Prophet Muhammad never initiated any of the battles. After the conquest and peacefully entering Makkah, delegates of the Arab tribes came to him from most of Arabia and voluntarily embraced Islam. In fact, the Levant, Iraq, Egypt, and North Africa were conquered with no forcible imposition of Islam on them; they willingly declared their conversion to Islam. After that, Islam spread widely with the spread of trade in India, China, and Indonesia. It is still spreading worldwide and is causing strong concern to many people.

To sum up, an unbiased researcher has to understand and interpret wars in light of the overall contemporary situation, not as general judgments applicable to every age or hypothetical situations. The same scale should be used to understand the incident of eradicating the unbelievers by Prophet Isaiah, or when we consider violence that occurred in the Spanish inquisition tribunals that led Jews to death. Such violence was inspired by some verses of the Bible which fuelled hatred and lead to chasing and persecuting Jews, although Christians boast that Jesus Christ (pbuh) never instructed his followers to kill the unbelievers. He told them that they will be punished by God on the Day of Judgment. Finally, it is instructive to enquire whether Prophet Moses (pbuh) instructed his followers to murder and eradicate the Palestinians in the way the Jews are doing today: suppressing and terrorizing any free opinion that may oppose them, both on a local and global scale.

The seventh Theme

Errors in References to the Holy Qur'an and the use of Mockery

In most of her discussions, Crone commits remarkable errors in referring to Qur'anic verses, whereas she does not make any error in citing other Arabic texts which indicates her command over Arabic. For instance, page 152, footnote 27; page 163, footnote 73; page 171, footnotes 16 and 21; page 177, footnote 46; page 226, footnote 98; and page 229, top of the page. These have been pointed out and corrected in the discussions above.

Crone uses a mocking, bigoted and prejudicial style in order to persuade the reader, thereby exceeding the bounds. She describes Arabs as "*barbarians*"[1] and Muslims as "*a nest of robbers"*[2], and the Quraysh tribe as "*a dwarf in the desert*"[3], and points out to their trade in the Levant as "Diaspora" as has been mentioned. [4] Above all, she describes the distribution of some spoils of wars by Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) as robbery and looting, *"the Prophet robs them of it…*"[5] Such descriptions express unequivocally the true feelings Crone holds against Arabs and Muslims.

She clearly reflects the impact of her personal attitude by destroying the historical investigation she

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[1] Crone, op. cit., p. 82.

2 Crone, op. cit., p. 165.

3 Crone, op. cit., p. 142.

4 To read about "diasporas", see p. 117, footnote 87.

5 Crone, op. cit., p. 91.

purports. In addition, Crone claims that, *"The entire tradition is tendentious, its aim being the elaboration of an Arabian Heilsgeschichte, and this tendentiousness has shaped the facts as we have them…*"[1] However, Islam as widely known considers all humans equal with no discrimination between them except for their righteousness which is the basis of distinction and superiority. This is one of the basic principles of Islam, "An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab except by piety and good action (Taqwa)". This basic fact is conveniently ignored and set aside by Crone.

1 Crone, op. cit., p. 230.

Conclusion

It is clear from the foregoing discussions of the main views of Crone that they were based on gross historical errors, personal biases and bigotry, though not on genuine ignorance. She neglected the texts that are contrary to her views, used incomplete citations, and doctored certain words of some texts, misplaced the dates of some great battles with others as in the case of the great Battle of Badr, which was examined in the light of a damaged and unreliable papyrus as a desperate attempt to make suspect what has been confirmed by divine revelation in the Holy Qur'an.

She has been exposed and refuted in details, and we have proved beyond doubt the invalidity of her spurious claims. She began by introducing her argument that Makkah is not situated in its current position which is documented historically and geographically. She claims that it is situated in some place in the North of the Arabian Peninsula near Balqa. On the basis of this hypothesis, she claims the existence of a big sanctuary temple in Northern Arabia visited by the Arabs. As a result, Crone claims that Islam rose first in this sanctuary, denies Makkan trade and its role in the international trade at that time, uses modern and contemporary historical terms and matches them with some events that occurred in the seventh century A.D.

From the very beginning, Crone tries to question Islamic sources, and the fundamentals of Islamic history. Her arguments have been refuted and her designs have been disproved and corrected. Therefore, a careful reader or researcher with professional and personal integrity

should not apply to his/her writings the same slanted approach that Crone follows in her dealing with Muslim historians. They should reject distorted information and the fanatical views against Islam that she displays. Such distorted information, warped and biased views have no place in a sound scholarly and historical research of integrity. This oriental subjective study and similar studies deliberately contribute to shaping Western mind and attitude against Islam and its adherents. Therefore, it can be concluded that studies like Crone's directly contribute in creating a hostile attitude towards Islam and Muslims. Yet, such judgment should not be overgeneralized to all oriental studies; there exist some which displays remarkable integrity and maintain admirable neutrality in the most contentious and sensitive issues. That is what integrity and scholarship is all about - upholding, defending and promoting the truth at all costs.

Done with the help of Allah, Almighty, Praise be to Him.

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